The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

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The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

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EDITORIAL

"CRITICISM by exorcism" is Max Eastman's phrase for what is apparently regarded in Marxian intellectual circles as the modern equivalent of intelligent discussion. Once upon a time that conception of civilization was universal, and we have had—relatively—only a few brief years during which men have rather valiantly and quite profitlessly endeavored to advocate and practise the opposite ideal. Apparently, the human mind is incapable of disinterested intellectual activity. The world, as we see it today, is once again in the power of the exorcists and excommunicators. On whatever side one may be, whatever the question at issue, sooner, rather than later, the hooligan mind asserts itself, and the situation is reduced to its lowest terms. Either agree, or we'll destroy you—not by meeting your arguments, but by the threat of machine-guns, castor oil, or the wrath of God.

That recently naturalized German, Herr Adolf Hitler, has undertaken to define Germanism and Aryanism with such a complete disregard for the ascertainable facts of biology, anthropology and German history that one wearily realizes that nothing but a reversal to medieval methods can help him and his followers in an intellectually indefensible position. It is obviously useless to argue, while protest merely encourages bravado, or checks its outward expression—a fatal consummation, as the psychiatrists have amply demonstrated. The craving for bullying—to bully or not to be bullied, that is the question—supplies the perfect modern answer to all those misguided individualists whom we must thank for whatever little has been achieved by the human mind.

There is not a discredited superstition of mankind that is not now being gravely considered as a proof of modernity and a solution of all our problems. The last pages of "Penguin Island" are coming true. It is in vain that one refers to the reiterated experience of history, that there is no solution to any problem quite so simple as those now advocated. This result would be ironical enough if, for the space of even five hundred years, even five per cent of any given population had ever displayed the faintest symptoms of honesty, intelligence and independence. But, since this phenomenon has, if anything, diminished to the vanishing point, it is somewhat difficult to see in a retreat to the various dogmas, religious, political and economic, any hope of more than the eternal recurrence of obscurantism. The offspring of our fashionable neo-Thomists and Anglo-Catholics, of the devotees of the Strong Man, or of the cult of the proletariat, will solemnly proceed to discover that Aquinas had decided limitations, that the Oxford Movement was not the beginning of wisdom, that the glorification of the American Tractor does not mean Utopia. In brief, we turn back the clock of history, but the smell of tortured, burning flesh, the shadows of the Dark Ages, hang about it still.

The Editors patriotically note that, whereas President Roosevelt's proposals in regard to the national control of railroads, banks, industry, farming, shipping, the unification of operations in the purchase of all raw materials, their manufacture and sale, stabilization of prices, uniform accounting, the thirty-hour week or five-hour day, etc., constitute economic and social statesmanship of the first American order, the same proposals and their practical enforcement in Russia constitute the Red Menace and, if advocated here by Communists, involve arrest, imprisonment, fines, expatriation and deportation.

THE WORST BOOK OF THE MONTH

LA VIE INTIME (Essais Proximistes)

By Comte Hermann de Keyserling

4¼ x 7⅛. Pp. 231. 15 fr.

Paris: Librairie Stock

THE MOTHER TONGUE

by TROY L. PERKINS

(The scene is a tobacconist's shop in Piccadilly Circus, London. An American enters, a cigar-lighter in his hand. He looks around the shop uncertainly and then advances to the counter. He is greeted by an expectant bow from the Englishman on duty in the shop.

Each speaks with what is, of course, an extreme accent.)

The American

Wyve gotta lighter yearat dunt click, nawanta getsum filler fewve gotny.

The Englishman

Ehbegy'pahdon?

The American

I thought mebbe yuddava machine in year—some sorta gadget—*(shows lighter).*

The Englishman

(Sees lighter.) Aoh, y'lightah! Quait. Desseh it wants petrol.

The American

(Thinking the other doesn't understand.) Alla wanta getusum filler—sforma lighter, see. Fadsum plain gas attuddo.

The Englishman

(Uncomprehending.) Desschts a bit dry. Wants a bit of petrol. We've gawt it in tins—ehmentseh tisnt trailly petrol—f'yoad like—

The American

(Not understanding a word.) I dunt thinkya get thydy. (*Looks around.*) 'Fewadsum canza filler—gasisokay inna pinch—ya see—

The Englishman

(Decides it isn't petrol his customer wants.) Of coahse, tmight be the flint wants changing—asmeffact tisnt toll likeleh—

The American

(Helplessly) This swatawant, see—

The Englishman

Ehbegy'pahdon?

The American

(Waving his hand in desperate resignation) Sokay. Letutgo.

(He starts to leave, wearily.)

The Englishman

(Feeling so frightfully unnecessarily disobliging) Eh—railly cahnt quait, ehmentseh, as the French seh, je ne comprends pas—

(The American turns quickly on hearing this and walks rapidly back to the counter.)

The American

Parlez-vous français?

The Englishman

Un peu, oui—mais—

The American

Ah, quelle chance! Parlons français!

The Englishman

Alors, qu'est-ce qu'il vous faut?

The American

Ce qu'il me faut, c'est un peu d'essence pour mon briquet.

The Englishman

Ah, ouiouiouiouioui! *(He produces a can of lighter fluid from beneath.)*

The American

Ah, bonbonbonbonbon!

(They become very French.)

The Englishman

Comme c'est rigolo! Je vous ai demandé tout-à-l'heure si vous vouliez de l'essence—en anglais—

The American

En anglais? Vraiment!

(They shake with laughter.)

Ça, c'est drôle, vous savez!

The Englishman

(Filling the lighter.) Un peu plus?

The American

Assez, assez! C'est très bien. *(He tries the lighter.)*

(It works.) Bon! Ça marche!

The Englishman

Oui, ça marche très bien.

The American

Et, maintenant, combien je vous dois, monsieur?

The Englishman

Rien, absolument rien!

The American

Mais, vous êtes trop gentil!

The Englishman

Pas du tout, pas du tout, mon vieux!

The American

Alors, je vous dirai bon jour, monsieur.

The Englishman

Bon jour, monsieur!

(They shake hands, bowing.)

The American

J'espère que madame, votre mère, va bien.

The Englishman

Très bien, merci! Et votre famille?

The American

Très bien, merci! *(Bowing politely.)* Alors, mes remerciements! *(Tipping his hat and bowing profusely)* Bon jour, monsieur!

The Englishman

(Bowing bountcously) Bonjour, monsieur!

(They shake hands again. The American goes out humming happily and turns down the Haymarket toward the office of the American Express Company.)

CURTAIN

THE NEW STATESMANSHIP

by ALBERT CAHN, JR.

IT seems that America, having apparently survived the perils of the Coolidge-Hoover period of government, is about to embark upon a thesaurus system of state. The main qualification, so it seems, of the newer statesmen is their ability to use a lexicon. For the solution of the most ticklish problems of government is now accomplished by finding a new word for them, which, apparently, makes everybody happy.

It was really Hoover who unwittingly accomplished this verbal theory of statesmanship with his debt moratorium. At that time it was unthinkable to propose that intergovernmental debts be ignored, even for a year; but the word "moratorium" did the trick. The success beautifully demonstrated to the politicians the ease with which the public will swallow any panacea, so long as it has draped about it a word sufficiently vague and impressive.

That Roosevelt would carry on this literary method of accomplishing things, and even expand upon it, was obvious early in the last presidential campaign. For Roosevelt and his whole family are a literary clan, used to words and their efficiency. One has only to mention the literary output of the presidential family, most of it since his nomination: "Government, not Politics" and "Looking Forward," both by Franklin Roosevelt; "When You Grow Up To Vote," by Eleanor Roosevelt; "My Boy Franklin," by Mrs. James Roosevelt; and numerous magazine articles and radio talks by everyone connected with the family. Also, Mrs. Roosevelt undertook the editorship of *Babies, Just Babies;* Mrs. Curtis Dall, daughter of the President, was associate editor of the magazine. La Dall is now a member of the staff of *Liberty* and a regular contributor to that gazette.

So great was the contagion of these literary efforts—or perhaps it was merely the *Zeitgeist*—that even Al Smith, though already in the company of Cellini, Benjamin Franklin and Rudy Vallée, by virtue of his autobiography, aspired to become an editor and from then on has divided his time between the tallest building in the world and *The New Outlook.*

That Roosevelt was to be adept in the new statesmanship was illustrated during the campaign by his treatment of the inflation problem. Everyone was afraid of inflation. So Roosevelt promised the electorate that he would not inflate the dollar; he stated that he would revaluate it. Immediately followed prolonged cheers. After the election, with a large bloc finally yelling for out and out inflation, a neat compromise was effected by calling it reflation, which kept everybody happy.

Also, Mr. Roosevelt was beautifully able to use the new system on his first day in office. A bank crisis was at hand. It would have been fatal to have simply closed the banks and not allowed them to pay out any money, but everything remained serene with the declaration of a bank holiday. People like holidays. The average man has fun during a holiday. He would probably have fun during a bank holiday, so no one was alarmed.

The same tactics were used to get the country off the gold standard. This was accomplished by having the country go off the gold standard while the Secretary of the Treasury repeatedly and emphatically denied the fact. After some time, when the export of gold was forbidden and the dollar dropped on the foreign exchanges, the Secretary finally admitted it, but by then no one could see any difference and consequently no one got excited.

The idea has ever : read to other countries. The Kellogg Pact some.me ago outlawed war and made it impossible. Since then, Chinese and Japanese troops have been firing guns at each other under various names, such as defensive boycott control, maintaining order, etc. Peru and Colombia have been doing the same thing, and in Germany, under the name of purification, Hitler has been killing Jews, imprisoning Communists, and muzzling the press.

There are several weighty problems that still have to be worked out. When prohibition is repealed, there will probably be a clause forbidding the saloon. That will be solved by finding another name for it. Also, the war-debts will have to be worked out along these lines. It is certain that the debts cannot be paid, and it is equally certain that they should not be defaulted. Some new word will have to be found. A suggestion is "credit re-establishment." That means nothing and sounds as if it should do the work.

COMMUNICATIONS

II

"THE world grows more full of villainy every day, and will so continue. There is small hope of any Reformation. It is best to spend one's time planting cowslips and picking slugs off seedling lettuces. There is a beautiful song in Theocritus where he describes Polyphemus—distracted with love for his sea nymph, deploring the fact that his eyebrows grow from ear to ear, and spending his sleepless nights singing old songs. How I should have liked to have heard that singing; those husky madrigals echoing over his hurdled folds under a full moon!"

—Llewelyn Powys.

THE FACTS OF LIFE IN POPULAR SONG

by SIGMUND SPAETH

WHEN Miss Mae West, in her film, "She Done Him Wrong," sang "I Like a Man That Takes His Time," she rightly assumed that her audiences would know what she meant, even those who might be unacquainted with the private life of a Hellion of Joy. With the censors doggedly opposing most of the sane and helpful sex-books, it has remained for the Popular Song to give Young America its most complete and detailed information concerning the Facts of Life.

Petronius, Boccaccio, the Golden Ass of Apuleius, Mlle. de Maupin and Only a Boy would hang their heads in shame if they knew how far our popular song-writers have surpassed them in the gentle art of suggestiveness. At least we can thank Miss West for playing a forthright prostitute without leers or smirks or blushes. (*"You're as welcome as the ae in Mae."*—Traditional)

When the girls who posed naked in a Broadway show were asked how they felt about it, they always answered, "We're just part of a beautiful picture." Thus Popular Song makes a beautiful picture of the intercourse of the sexes, never descending to the short, ugly words that are so common in everyday conversation, but implying whatever the young folks might like to know with a variety of technique that the sex athletes themselves would envy.

In the language of Popular Song it is understood that such words as "hug" and "kiss" may represent any stage of procreative activity, that the night-time is by no means limited to sleeping, and that illicit relationships can be charmingly discussed by using such whimsical titles as "Mama" and "Papa," or "Daddy," for the protagonists. There are many ways of suggesting a desirable potency on the male side and a corresponding appetite on the part of the female, most of this glorification going back to the traditional achievements of the colored race.

Long before "it" became the philosophical symbol of sex-appeal in general, that little neuter pronoun had served as a specific label for the most popular of all human acts. 'Way back in the past century there was a song called "They All Do It," which was considered pretty naughty in those days. But there was comparatively little agitation when Irene Bordoni, some years later, sang "Do It Again." George Gershwin composed the music for that song, and he was young enough then to believe that the lyric actually referred to kissing. In any case, the same formula was used with equal success a few years later in "Do, do, do what you've done, done, done before." Since then there have been popular songs called "Let's Do It," "Let's Do It Again," "How Do You Do It?"; "Do Something," and "She Wouldn't Do It," tending gradually toward a defeatist attitude. Henry Souvaine stated the problem in a practical and economic fashion when he wrote "Wouldja For a Big, Red Apple?", which was very popular first in the show "Americana," and then in the New York speakeasies.

II

The mysterious rites of love, with all the necessary appendages, have enjoyed a species of phallic worship in a number of songs which referred, somewhat obscurely, to "that thing." Perhaps the most popular of them all was "You've Got That Thing," and a close rival had the more provocative title, "Shake That Thing." Probably nothing more than healthful exercise was demanded by such recent songs as "Shake It and Break It," "Shake It, Ida" and "Move That Thing."

There is of course plenty of smart smut in our more sophisticated musical shows which proceeds quite rightly on the premise of a well educated audience. To this class belongs "A Rainy Day," from "Flying Colors," describing hot stuff in a taxi-cab. "And So I Married the Girl" has an insolent nonchalance, which is shared by "Why Dance?", "Off Again, On Again" (from "Walk a Little Faster"), "My Lover" (from "Take a Chance"), and some of the Chevalier hits. The last word in picturesqueness of suggestion has recently been supplied by Little Jack Little with a song called "When My Little Pomeranian Met Your Little Pekingese." (The little darlings were only kissing, of course, and all that the hero did was to squeeze the heroine's hand.)

Perhaps the old asterisk dodge is better after all. It was most successfully used in that great waltz hit, "Paradise," with the added implication of a dream to make it entirely proper. The chorus gave the asterisk effect by simply indicating a humming "Mm" at five different points, the last rising to the climax of a whistle. These strange interludes followed the information that "he holds my hand," "I understand," "his eyes afire me with one desire," "and then he dims the light," "and then he * * * * * (whistle)", "he takes me to Paradise."

I believe the publishers of "Paradise" were eventually forced to fill in the blank spaces with innocent words, but the original idea was excellent nevertheless. (*"Business always will be brisk, when you have an asterisk."*—Old Proverb.)

There was some criticism also of the words of "As You Desire Me," evidently by those who did not know their Pirandello, and the lyric was actually changed for broadcasting purposes, perhaps because its ideals were far too high for any average female. But they overdid the radio censorship when Hupfeld's perfectly harmless and domestic "Let's Put Out the Lights and Go To Bed" was changed to "Let's Put Out the Lights and Go To Sleep,"—a rather fine distinction.

"As You Desire Me" belongs to the "beautiful" school of sexy songs, which includes also "Why Can't This Night Go On Forever?" (the answer is obvious), "You Gave Me Everything But Love," "Body and Soul," "Night and Day," and "What Did I Get In Return?". Torch songs in general belong to this class, and the best of all torch songs is Richard Connell's burlesque, "I Give In," with its priceless lines: "'I'll be adamant', that was my vow, So I never had a man till now," and "So take all my love, or any part thereof, for I give in."

III

A less romantic and rather eugenic attitude is taken by such songs as "I'm Young and Healthy" ("so let's be bold; In a year or two or three, maybe we will be too old") and "Fit as a Fiddle" ("and ready for love"). There is common sense also in "You're Getting To Be a Habit With Me" and "Blame It On the Moonlight." From these matter-of-fact interpretations of sex life, it is an easy transition to the hotcha type, which demands and gets as much as it can.

"Wait Till I Get You In My Dreams," "Ooh, What I Could Do To You," "I Need Loving," "Slow But Sure," "One More Time," "We Better Get Together Again," "A Good Man Is Hard To Find,"—these are all glorifications of a definite achievement. They are of a piece with the scientific investigations of heat, as related to sexual accomplishments, and of course the "hot" songs (including "Sweet and Hot") are too numerous even to be mentioned in detail. The film, "Sunny Side Up," had a song, "Turn On the Heat," with the suggestion "Get hot for Papa, or Papa will freeze."

There are plenty of "Hot Mamas" in popular song literature, as well as a "High-powered Mama," a "High-stepping Mama" and a "Wild Cat Mama." The paternal side of the picture includes "Aggravatin' Papa," "Loud-speakin' Papa," and a recent duet, between a "Radio Papa" and a "Broadcastin' Mama," which clearly indicates mutual recriminations in terms of the tubes, batteries and wave lengths of aerial art (Okeh Record, No. 8911). The classic of the "Daddy" group is "My Daddy Rocks Me With One Steady Roll," which was softened to "My Gal Rocks Me" for the general public.

"Underneath the Harlem Moon" gave a hint of capabilities beyond the conception of most white folks, and there is a whole folio of "Songs My Father Taught Me" that unquestionably reaches the farthest point South in this whole subject of the Facts of Life. "I'm Wild About That Thing" (Columbia Record, No. 14427) practically clears up the mystery concerning "this thing called Love," and "My Handy Man" gives a convincing picture of homely efficiency. It seems this athletic gentleman can do just about everything a house-keeping lady might wish. ("My ice don't seem to melt away, I get a fresh piece every day." Columbia Record, No. 14353). "My Man o' War" puts the thing in terms of naval maneuvres, and this hero "never misses when he brings up his big Artillery" (Victor Record, No. 23281; Columbia Record, No. 14618). "You've Got To Give Me Some" and "Electrician Blues" will complete any education that may still be below the passing mark.

I shall not touch here upon the frankly rowdy songs that deal with the commercial aspects of sex life, such as "Eadie was a Lady," "A Penny For Your Thoughts," ("a dollar for your kiss, my stocks and bonds for more than this"), "Hannah from Panama," and the classic "Frankie and Johnnie"; nor those emasculated versions of old-time ribaldries now in circulation, "Columbo," "Barnacle Bill, the Sailor" and "The Bastard King of England" (to which obeisance was made by "The illegitimate daughter of an illegitimate son of an illegitimate nephew of Napoleon"). I have no great objection even to the unashamed originals, or to the sturdy promiscuity of "Two Buck Tim from Timbuctoo" and his fellow-sailors.

But I feel a particular kind of nausea when I see or hear some tiny tot of six or eight glorifying the Facts of Life in song, while an adoring Mama sits by complacently. I wonder if the fond Mamas themselves know what it is all about. Maybe they got those very tots by spontaneous combustion or something.

SERVANTS OF GOD

No. 14

From the New York Evening Journal:

The Rev. Ludwig J. Karlovsky, 51, who was pastor of the Slovakian Lutheran Holy Trinity Church, 332 E. 20th Street, when arrested last November, was sentenced to five to ten years in Sing Sing in General Sessions today for impairing the morals of a minor.

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THE SCIENCE OF LAST THINGS

by JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

WHEN an early Christian dropped into the catacombs for a chat he was more likely than not to find some of his old cronies discussing the Last Judgment. For fifteen hundred years after it had ceased to be a common topic for small talk, theologians continued to discuss the subject, but during the last century it has rather tended to drop out of even theology, giving place to more cheerful and less spectacular subjects. Now, however, Eschatology has come back into fashion. Wherever two or three serious minds are gathered together, the end of the world is pretty certain to be taken for granted and the bolder spirits even set a date beyond which this rotten old society of ours cannot possibly continue to exist.

At first, of course, it was only the Capitalist System which was damned. Soon, however, it began to be generally admitted that art, science, literature and philosophy—at least as we have known them—are also approaching their end, for the simple reason that they are obviously unfit for the New Day. Those who are sure that they are saved and who have their ceremonial smocks ready for the great transformation scene rejoice—as it is only natural that they should, but the remarkable thing is the resignation of the damned. Minor poets, amateur psychoanalysts, plain bourgeois decadents, and, especially, the sons of the very rich, declare mildly that it is Bound to Come! They do not see themselves transmogrified into Workers; they admit that they would have a very slim time under the new order even if they should happen to survive its arrival; but who, they ask, are they, that they should attempt to stand in the way of destiny—even if they could?

When the *Daily Worker* assures them that their time has come they begin to look about for their hats and their coats. The idea seems to be that they are now ready to sacrifice themselves to the common good. They do not expect to reach the promised land and they may even feel that it would not promise much to them. But what are a few decadent individuals in comparison with the glorious tomorrow? Within one generation at most the Planned Society is to be fully functioning and a reconditioned generation, innocent of the Profit Motive, is going to be supremely happy taking its Saturdays off in some People's Park for Culture and Recreation.

Stranger things have happened. It may possibly be that humanity will be more contented when it has completely eliminated those maladjustments to nature and society which are responsible for what we call Human Nature. But I wonder if the new society is really going to emerge in all its perfection quite so promptly as even the damned seem ready to suppose. Sometimes they compare the crisis to that of the ancient world: We are the declining Romans and the Communists are the barbarians bringing rugged strength and the revivifying force of a new faith. They seem, however, to forget that the new day announced by the collapse of Rome was some fifteen hundred years away when the good tidings were first spread. They seem to forget that dawn did not follow directly upon twilight, that what really came was the Dark Ages and a certain very remarkably long Depression which, as Mr. Keynes once remarked, lasted six hundred years.

II

If history call it Dialectical Materialism if you insist) teaches anything, it teaches that you cannot build a new society upon the fresh ruins of an old one. You have to go through some gloomy period of which, so it seems to me, the Russia of the present day affords a good example. Surely conditions in that country do not much suggest the renaissance. But surely, on the other hand, the simple dogmatisms prevalent there and the enthusiastic inquisitions at which poor heretics are examined on the fine points of the Marxian faith, do suggest the Middle Ages and do suggest, still further, that the new vigor will require some centuries of mellowing before it is ready to evolve even the Communist paradise.

As for me—poor doomed Roman though, perhaps, I am—I must confess that there are limits to my readiness for immolation. I am not sure that I should welcome chaos and old night, even if I were certain that the very next generation would bless me for my noble abnegation. But when it comes to thinking hopefully of what the world will be like a thousand years hence, I renege completely, and I do not propose to be a willing victim to the welfare of any great-to-the-tenth-power grandchildren.

After all, it is hardly likely that when Attila made his descent, any Italian exclaimed, "Thank God, the barbarians have begun to arrive at last! In another one hundred and fifty years Theodoric will be in charge and the Dark Ages will at least be under way. In a thousand after that, the Renaissance will have commenced, and in another three hundred or so, historians will begin to discover that the fall of Rome was a blessing no more effectively disguised than the greatest blessings are said usually to be."

On the contrary, all noble Romans were probably thinking of their own necks when the sword descended, and if they spared a moment to consider Society it was probably with a pang of regret for all that was about to be destroyed. Perhaps the Marxian despisers of bourgeois culture will some day begin to collect the fragments which happen to have survived them, even as the not-so-early Christians began to reassemble the bits of Pagan culture. But it may well be a century or two before they get around to that.

Meanwhile the Worker has a lot to go through, and we poor damned souls have no cause to be especially complacent. It is even barely possible that we are not as completely done for as some seem ready to admit. We may, at least, take comfort in the fact that Rome was some three or four hundred years in the falling. But if we really are done for, then we, along with a good many things associated with us, are done for for a good long time to come. Disinterested thought and individual freedom are not coming back tomorrow. Perhaps they will in, let us say,—after making due allowance for the more rapid tempo of recent history—three hundred years.

RAPE AND LYNCH

by ROBERT WHITCOMB

SEVERAL years after the Negroes had awakened to their power and seized the Black Belt as well as other parts of the South, including New Orleans, a white man had the temerity to rape a Negress. At least, that is what the lynch gang, all composed of angry Negroes, claimed he had done. The white man denied it. He said the raping of Negro girls had stopped as soon as the Negroes seized power in the South. The Negro lynch gang called him a liar and started to string him up. No, the white man said, he was not a liar, and besides, lynching was a white man's sport and he was surprised that Negroes participated in it.

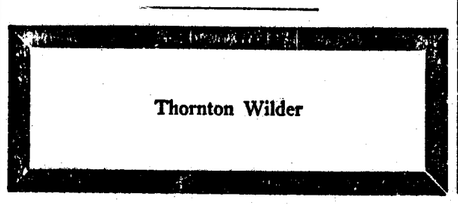
This stopped the Negro lynch gang for a split second, but they were so angry that they could not stop themselves, particularly as they had just got the Negro mayor of New Orleans to donate a new rope. The mayor had said, Sure, I'll donate a rope with the greatest of delight and with my best personal wishes, but you boys must never divulge the fact that I am the source of ropes for the necks of white men. At the words "white men" the mayor spat with disgust. The Negro lynch gang was delighted with the new, strong rope and they said, Sure, we'll keep it mum, Mr. Mayor. All except one of the gang, who was rather quiet; he was a big husky Negro and he had been a leader in the revolution back in 1933.

This quiet fellow piped up, in front of the mayor and all, and he said, Yeah, mayor, you shouldn't be entering into anything like this—you know lynching is wrong. Sure, the mayor said, I know it's wrong, but we ain't been killing enough white men (spit) lately, so hop to it, boys. The Negro lynch gang all yelled at these words, and drowned out what the big husky quiet Negro was saying, which was, Yeah, mayor, you forget all the working-class white men who helped us back in 1933; Yeah, mayor, you forget the comrades of the revolution who helped us to kill, wipe out and deport the members of the Southern white ruling class, the white bosses who ran the plantations and the Birmingham steel mills, the Simon Legrees who kept both poor whites and Negro slaves sharing their crops; Yeah, mayor, you forget that white workers helped us to finish Abraham Lincoln's job—and here you are donating a rope for lynching; Yeah, mayor, we can't be lynching white men just because we are the ruling class. But the Negro lynch gang was yelling so hard that nobody heard the big quiet Negro who had been a leader back in the revolution of 1933.

The lynching of the white man was taking place under a telephone pole in the outskirts of New Orleans. While they were on their way out there the big quiet Negro had mounted a horse and ridden away. The white man was uttering his last protest, saying that he had never raped a Negro girl in his life, when up rode the President of the Black Belt, the hero of the revolution that every Negro worshipped. The President was a small, calm, black man. He stood up in the back of his Rolls Royce, and he spoke to the Negro lynch gang, and the immense sea of excited black faces. Boys, the President said, take that new rope off that white man's neck. And then the President continued:

Boys, you know as well as I do that lynching is wrong. I'm surprised at you, after all these years of education. You know as well as I do that lynching is only for the immature minds of white bosses who know no better. Now all the white bosses are dead or driven out of our great Republic of the Black Belt, and we need have lynching no more. If this man raped a girl, white or black, he must be tried in the courts of the Republic of the Black Belt, and he must be given a fair trial, before a jury of both whites and blacks. We must remember our white brothers who work alongside of us in our factories and on our farms, and we must treat them as equals. We must put a stop to this Negro chauvinism. A Negro is no better than a white man—provided he is a worker—and so let this be the last we ever hear of lynching in the Black Belt.

Then the President rode away, through the tear-stained faces of his fellow Black Belters, and a few weeks later the Mayor of New Orleans printed a public apology in all the newspapers because he had donated the rope, and the white man who was saved from lynching was sentenced to ten years on the Black Belt model prison farm because he had called lynching a white man's sport instead of calling it a tool of the bosses.



Thornton Wilder

INAUGURAL

by JOSEPH M. GOLLER

LADIES and Gentlemen, it will now be our pleasure to present to you over this network the ceremonies attendant to the inauguration of President-Elect Franklin D. Roosevelt. This is station WWWW, your announcer is Harold Horner, who is down here in Washington to tell you all about the events of this very interesting day. We are very well situated here, high above everything else, and have an excellent view of what is before us. Crowds of people are here in Washington to witness the induction into office of President-Elect Franklin D. Roosevelt. The grand stands are quite full, though they are not completely full. There is a very large crowd here now but many people are still coming in. Most of the seats are now taken but a few of them are still empty.

On the other side is the platform on which our next President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, will take the oath of office. There are not many seats on the platform. There are only a few seats on the platform. Many people will not be seated on the platform. As a matter of fact there will not be many people on the platform when President-Elect Franklin D. Roosevelt takes the oath of office as the new chief executive of these United States.

The events of today, which heretofore have run along so smoothly, are now slowed up. In fact, they are somewhat retarded It is because the events of today, which had been running along so smoothly, are now retarded that we have this slight delay in the program. However, we hope that the delay will not last long and that we shall soon view that great event which we are all awaiting—the inauguration into office of President-Elect Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Neither Mr. Hoover nor Mr. Roosevelt, our President-Elect, are as yet on the platform. They are not yet in view. We have our eyes fixed on the pillar, from behind which they should emerge. They have not as yet emerged. It is evident that they are having difficulty in emerging. There is a very large crowd here and the aisle down which our President-Elect, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, will have to come is quite narrow. As a matter of fact the crowds are pressing in on it and the police are having very great difficulty in retaining any aisle whatsoever.

We now have a glimpse of our President-Elect, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and President Herbert Hoover. They are not yet coming down the aisle as the aisle is now very congested. They are standing beside the pillar, from which we said they would emerge, waiting for the police to clear an aisle for them. The two men seem to be chatting quite amicably. They have begun to come down the aisle but they are moving very slowly as the people are crowding in all around our President-Elect, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

They have to stand there now while the police clear the aisle some more. They are both smiling. They seem to be enjoying themselves. They nod to acquaintances and friends. The police have finally cleared an aisle. Here they come! The people are cheering our next President, President-Elect Franklin D. Roosevelt.

They are now approaching the platform. They are ascending the platform. They are on the platform. The people are cheering Mr. Roosevelt, who will be our next President. You will now be switched over to the platform and our President-Elect, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

II

Now that the crowds are cheering and the various people on the platform have shaken hands, and Mr. Hoover is gone, Mr. Roosevelt, our new President, is going. The crowd still cheers as our new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and his party make their way to their cars.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his party are now seated in their cars and are slowly beginning to move off midst the cheers of the multitude. As the Presidential party is now moving out of view I shall turn you over to Martin Milton, who is in an automobile immediately behind that of our new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

III

This is Martin Milton speaking to you from the automobile in which he is, and which is following along right behind the car of our new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, as the Presidential party wends its way to the White House. It is very nice to know that Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt has been inducted into office and that we can now speak of him as "President," and shall no longer have to continue saying "President Elect."

As we move slowly on our way to the White House, the crowds are cheering our new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt. All along the way it is very interesting to note the great number of children who are here. They are lined up in front of the crowds that line the curbs. The crowds on the curbs have evidently allowed the children to come to the front. The children can see much better from the front.

As we wend our way slowly to the White House the crowds cheer the new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, all the way. In acknowledgment of the cheers President Roosevelt nods and smiles to the people to the left, and to the right. Mrs. Roosevelt, wife of our new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, keeps her white kid-gloved hand high in the air, waving to the left, and to the right. Her arm does not seem to get tired.

We shall now turn you over to David Darling, who is in a blimp up above the procession. We don't know whether or not Mr. Darling will be able to hear us but we shall signal him anyway. If he can hear us, he will answer. If he can't hear us, we shall know that that is the case, as he won't answer.

IV

This is David Darling speaking to you from the blimp which is high above the procession in which our new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and his party are on their way to the White House. It is rather windy up here and we cannot always see the parade, though sometimes we do. When the front end of the blimp is down we can see the parade and your automobile, but when the front end of the blimp is up, we can't see anything. It has been so nice to be able to speak to you as we follow along above the parade of our President, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

V

This is Martin Milton speaking again from his automobile which is following immediately behind that of the new President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It was very nice to hear from you, Mr. Darling. We are all very glad that you have had such a fine view.

We are now approaching the White House and the crowds are still cheering the President, Franklin D. Roosevelt. He still nods to the crowds, a little to the left and a little to the right. Mrs. Roosevelt is still waving to the people, a little to the left and a little to the right.

We have now lost sight of the Presidential car, as it has entered the White House gates. The crowds are cheering. We don't see the car yet but we know where it should be entering. There is another drive to the left. Perhaps they will come in on that one.

The municipal police are attempting to keep order and facilitate the passage of President Roosevelt's car. We can't see the car yet. On one drive, though, there are some mounted police. They don't seem a bit excited. It's just another day's work for them.

There is a break in the crowd! The President's car is coming through! Our new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, is driving in on the Treasury side of the White House!

AMERICAN CREDO – 1933

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

§1.

THAT it is dishonorable and dishonest for a foreign nation like France or a foreign city like Vienna to default on its debt to Americans, but that it is not dishonorable or dishonest for a native state like Arkansas or a native city like Detroit to default on its debt to Americans.

§2.

That a foreign nation breaks its word of honor when it declines to pay the American holders of its bonds in gold, as it promised, but that it is merely a matter of economic necessity, and without any relation to a word of honor, when the United States does the same thing.

§3.

That bankers who have mishandled the funds of banks are crooks and must be sent to prison, but that the heads of mortgage companies who have guaranteed billions of dollars worth of mortgages to their customers and have no money left to meet the guarantees—or even to pay the relatively small amount of interest—should be afforded the protection of the law.

§4.

That it is proper to recognize Hitler Germany, but that it would be a mistake to recognize Stalin Russia.

§5.

That the hoarding by a rich woman of $500,000 in gold fashioned into jewelry is permissible, but that the hoarding of $500 in gold coin by a poor woman is punishable by a fine of $10,000 and ten years in jail.

§6.

That Hitler's persecution of the Jews for a period of six months is odious, but that the various Russian czars' persecution of the Jews for a period of 200 years was nothing to get excited about.

§7.

That Germany's burning of the books of celebrated writers is narrow-minded and despicable, but that the United States' barring from import of the books of celebrated writers is not.

§8.

That for an American to be a pacifist in 1917 was to be a traitor to his country, but that for an American to be a pacifist in 1933 is to be a far-seeing patriot.

§9.

That it is wrong for the Japanese today to use armed force to open up trade channels in Manchuria, but that it was a noble act for the United States, in 1853, to use battleships to open up trade channels in Japan.

§10.

That it is unethical for a foreign government to demand that Americans accept less than the full amount of its war debt, but that it is ethical for the United States government to demand that Americans turn in their gold at a twenty per cent loss to themselves.

§11.

That England's abandonment of the gold standard had the flavor of a sharp trick, but that the United States' abandonment of the gold standard was an altruistic gesture toward the improvement of the world's economic status.

THE GRAPH OF THE NEGRO DROPS

by ERNEST HOWARD CULBERTSON

A FEW years ago, owing to one of those anomalous quirks of public taste which seem to be peculiarly indigenous to America, theatregoers and devotees of the novel suddenly began to evince a keen interest in the more serious aspects of Negro character. Up to that time, chiefly because authors had had little or no incentive, there had been no concerted attempt to interpret the Negro with any degree of fidelity. There was a widespread and fairly just feeling that the public was not even remotely concerned with the more sombre phases of his life. Then, all at once, Jove nodded (or mayhap Beelzebub), and heigho! the dance was on! With prodigious industry writers began to turn out tomes dealing with the Negro, publishers to publish them, and playwrights to grind out exhibits which were alleged to hold the mirror up to the Negro soul (and his buttocks as well), and theatrical managers to produce them. The public proceeded to buy the books and, in many instances, to rush to the theatre to see the plays.

Up rose several high priests of belles lettres and literary soothsayers and declaimed to the wide, wide world that the Negro and his background constituted material of surpassing importance to the creative artist. Highbrows near and far "went Negro" with a vengeance. A few enthusiasts in the hinterland took it upon themselves to declare that the phenomenon "signalized the recrudescence of the primordial" and in their jejune ardor asserted that the field should prove a mine of unexampled richness for folk-drama and literature for eons to come. They were prone to use such phrases as "Greek simplicity," "primitive power," "freshness of unspoiled child-men." They suggested that here was a magnificent opportunity for delightful and profitable experimentation in monochromatic nuances, and augured the bringing into being of "microcosmic primordial types which would throw into bas-relief effete Caucasian decadence—" and "canvases in which the artificialities, stupidities and banalities of modern society might be set off against the rich ochre of masterly Negroid portraiture and imposing racial murals of primal strength, integrity, beauty and cosmic truth."

To one young lady it was to be a sort of going back and digging down into and re-examining the sub-strata of consciousness—an identifying and re-appraising the basic instincts and urges of mankind (as manifested in the lives of simple black folk)—as it were, "an adventure in super-Freudian racial exploration in terms of Neo-Classicism."

The ebullitions of some of the younger members of the critical fraternity during this period led one to believe that they had suddenly come to look upon the Negro as the "white hope" of literature.

II

The wave or cycle which brought the Negro directly to the fore really made its advent with the production of "The Emperor Jones," by O'Neill. During the next eight or nine years there followed a veritable galaxy of plays—some good, some indifferent and some unbelievably bad. The more notable were "All God's Chillun Got Wings," "Porgy," "Abraham's Bosom," "Lulu Belle," "Black Boy," "Harlem," and "Green Pastures."

Novels such as "Nigger," by Clement Wood, "Nigger Heaven," by Carl Van Vechten, "Mamba's Daughters," by Dubose Heyward, "Black April" and "Scarlet Sister Mary," by Julia Peterkin—along with an imposing list of others—made their appearance and achieved a measurable degree of popularity.

As is generally the case, a combination of factors was probably accountable for this evocation of interest in the more sombre phases of our Afro-American brethren—some imponderable and some not. Very likely there were certain planetary influences and inscrutable subterranean stirrings of the collective mind. There also entered the element of novelty, for which the public is always so eager, together with the repercussions of the glowing tributes paid to a few of the excellent earlier plays and novels of this period by that handful of eminent critics who have rendered such yeoman service to American literature and drama. Added to these came the yippings and yappings of the aforementioned high priests and critical gentry of the hinterland who, sensing what was afoot, eagerly leaped on the bandwagon of popular acclaim.

Notwithstanding the fact that, for some definite and logical reasons, this wave (or call it what you will) was not destined to last any great length of time, it was arresting and significant. First and foremost, it marked the emergence of the Negro into the public arena as something more than a mere grinning, cake-walking, jazz-braying Simian, and the discovery that there were elements of serious, heart-stirring (as well as cerebral) appeal and interest in his character. And some poetry, too! It also served perhaps to bring to the attention of some that the explosive laughter, the roistering gaiety, the dancing and prancing, might hide a gnawing inarticulate anguish—or be the mask of a deep-seated and inextinguishable rebellion of which the Negro himself was not entirely conscious.

However, I feel quite certain that the majority of writers who really *knew* the Negro, and were sincere with themselves, realized after they turned out a play or a novel about him (and possibly before) that he is primarily an objective figure—that he presents artistic material which is limited and not overly endowed with variety.

The Negro has had no direct part in those ages

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

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THE GRAPH OF THE NEGRO DROPS

(Continued from Page 2, Col. 5)

of travail—that interminable Calvary of the human spirit since the dawn of Western civilization—in the course of which the processes of creative evolution have wrought Caucasian consciousness as we know it today. Upon this our Afro-American can only draw vicariously. As the history of races goes he is not far removed from his ethnic roots. He is still an essentially elemental being.

In the main, there is in his nature an inevitable paucity of intellectual depth and subtlety and strength, powers of will, delicacies of feeling and range of emotion. There is also an absence of a whole category of pusillanimities, vanities, stupidities, conceits and brutalities, inhumanities and venalities, which it seems the lot of higher civilization to breed in some of its men and women. This diversified whole comprises the gorgeous, infinitely varied and fluid fabric out of which genius and talent in every age have fashioned characters of towering stature, beauty, truth, imaginative appeal and symbolic significance to the endless enrichment of literature and drama.

III

When one has rendered a character, or group of characters, in emotional relationships and conflicts which run the full gamut of all those turgid primitive emotions which surge in the Negro bosom, and has done adequate justice to a small assortment of sterling, homely virtues, one is conscious of having said about all there is to say so far as the Negro is concerned as an individual—that is, as a human prototype. Those emotions—lust, hate, revenge, love, anger, fear, passion—might be said to constitute the "primary colors of emotion."

Fancy the difficulties and limited scope of a painter (Cubists excepted) whose major efforts, arbitrarily or otherwise, were *preponderantly* confined to the use of primary colors! In dealing with the Negro, a writer is confronted by much the same problem. For one who has artistic and interpretive integrity at heart, it is out of the question to use shades or gradations of these primal emotions, for the reason that the lives of Negroes—which are racially typical or representative and lend themselves at once to effective exploitation in the theatre and on the printed page—are uniformly replete with emotional hyperbole.

As we know, by exercise of skill and ingenuity a writer has evolved a Negro play or novel of outstanding quality, and then found it a sterile and practically impossible task to go on creating others which would approach it in originality and vitality by the employment of the self-same primary colors. The more discerning critics and discriminating readers and theatregoers sensed this during the earlier years of Negro ascendency, and hence their short-lived interest.

As a member of a child-race—an alien race—caught in the phantasmagoria of Western civilization, struggling in the main for bare economic existence, prodded by the fates into an all-too-speedy evolution, laboring manfully to achieve some of the white man's moral and social standards, the creature of forces and circumstances of which he has little or no understanding, and over which no control, the Negro is assuredly a tragic figure.

As such, he offers themes which are naturally the marrow of tragedy—themes in which phases of his psychology are necessarily subordinated to the factors and influences ordering his destiny. They are few, however, because he is one of a great aggregation of human beings on substantially the same social and economic plane. The problem of the individual may vary greatly in acuteness and in the suffering occasioned, but not to any extent in kind.

As a subject of folk plays—though several Negro folk plays of merit have been contributed to the native folk-drama of America—he cannot hope to rank with the peasantry of Ireland, England or of Continental Europe. He is (as an Afro-American) far too young—and is without the traditions, the wealth of saga, legend and poesy that are their heritage. Spirituals he has given us. Some of them are beautiful and moving and bespeak, as nothing else in his life does, his barbaric origin. But unless they are used with great discrimination and taste and sparingly—they soon grow wearisome.

I have an idea that the majority of people who supported the plays and bought the novels treating of the Negro during the recent notable interlude were really caught and held by the element of novelty. When this was spent, they quickly lost interest. The great body of Americans—the teeming millions—never have had and never will have any more serious interest in the Negro as an individual, the Negro problem, or genuine attempts to interpret him artistically, than they have in the Eskimo—probably not as much.

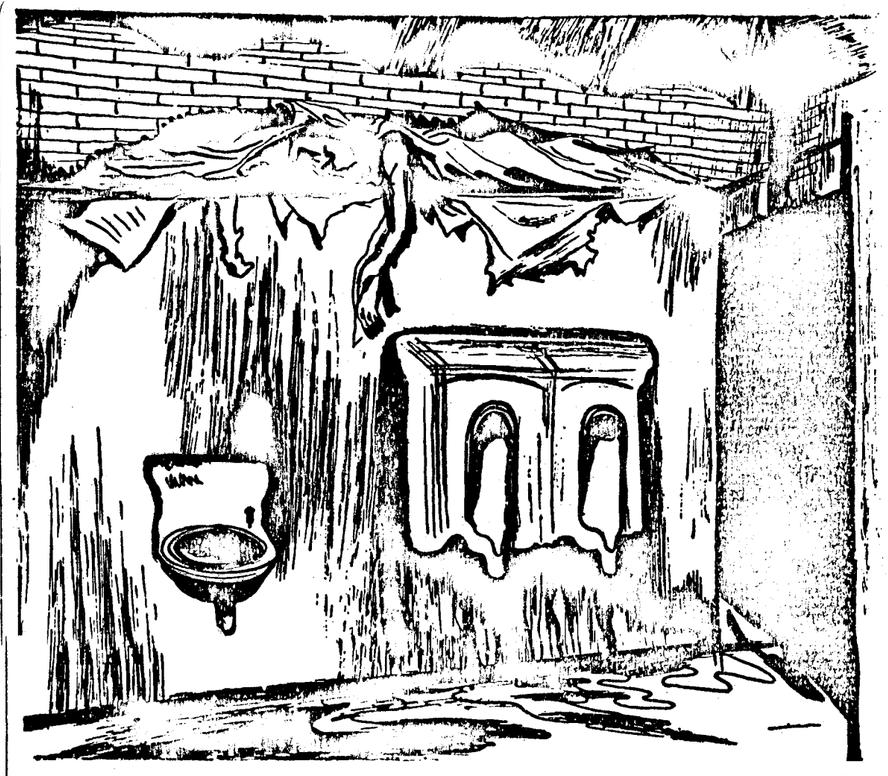
DRAMATIC ART A LA HOLLYWOOD

Note in the New York Times:

The gyrations of the star in a rôle that marks a departure from nearly everything attempted by her have been photographed through a new device of William Cameron Menzies. Moving in three directions, two of them simultaneously, the device makes possible a new angle in filming big scenes. A giant perambulator elevator, containing a caged camera platform, was built. The perambulator hangs from a rail attached to the ceiling of one of the giant stages. The perambulator moves in either a straight line or a semi-circle as desired, and the elevator moves up or down at will by a special system of weights and pulleys.

From the press bulletin of the Warner Brothers:

"River's End" is a tale of the Canadian Northwest by James Oliver Curwood. For the blizzard scenes, fifty tons of gypsum and an equal amount of bleached cornflakes were piled into drifts. Six airplane motors and propellers stirred up a ninety-mile wind which blew the gypsum and corn flakes across the scene.



—Hubert Davis

American Housing Plan 1933

AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR

by THOMAS WOOD

I SUSPECT I am one of the last fifteen people in the world who go to plays, attend films, listen to concerts and read books for purposes of entertainment. I used to know others—or I think I did—who were simply spectators, too. But in the last five years it has been delicately impressed upon me that I am grossly uninformed and probably abysmally stupid, apparently, because I don't know *(a)* what Ethel Barrymore said to the stage hand that time, *(b)* in what sort of tea Janet Gaynor rinses her hair, *(c)* why Prokofiev decided on a series of diminishing sevenths instead of a cowbell in his codetta, *(d)* what "plangent prose" or an "inverted heptameter" is, and *(e)* who publishes whose books.

Perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps I should make a cult of it and learn these fascinating details. Certainly our enterprising American press lays them out in lavish triple-dotted paragraphs for consumption with the morning coffee and evening brandy. But so far I have been contented in my foolish little way to sit for two hours and be mildly or deeply entranced by an actress, a comedian, a musician, a writer. Or, if I wasn't entranced, not to sit two hours, but to do something else.

In the theatre, for instance, I sit dreamily satisfied so long as no one falls into the footlights during the death scene, or no one lets me see he has lost his lines, and there aren't more than three confessions of illegitimate pregnancy. If a black buck from Harlem has swift feet and a strong sense of rhythm, I easily forget (if I ever knew) that he's stealing Bill Robinson's stuff. And if a buxom belle with a fine bosom engages in a refined sort of coon shouting which I like, I don't give what Uncle George used to call a hoot in hell if she started her career with Jerry Maloney's Gaiety Babes and has since married a man with a harelip who beats her with a stockingful of sand.

Yet I am persistently reminded, via the conversation of my studious friends and the special departments in the daily papers, that I should know these things and brood upon them.

A young female leans forward and gurgles, "But didn't you notice that marvelous gesture of the left hand when the Duchess said 'What, *you!*'" Or Winchell rushes into print with various *esoterica* to the effect that the latest big noise on Broadway got his start by delivering iced caviar and knackwurst to Carl Laemmle's back door.

If I hear Koussevitsky I am supposed to have marked, for purposes of conversation, how he brought out the violas in the second movement, when actually I was watching the kettle-drummer through all four. If I read "The Fountain"—and I was a fool ever to admit it—I must interrupt the pleasant assimilation of a superior dinner and cast back three weeks to determine just how Mr. Morgan is "derivative" and why the book is "essentially masculine."

In one of the arts I am occasionally articulate, although I prefer not to be, and that is in painting. Perhaps that is why I am seldom bored and frequently enraged by the ladies and gentlemen of the public prints who are professionally articulate, and widely quoted, on the subject. In no other art, possibly excepting music, do the commentators so tirelessly draw upon the clichés with the effortless practise of a printer at his type case. A canvas is "well painted." An etching shows "meticulous draughtsmanship." A sculpture is "exquisitely modelled." The conversational version is even more prostrating.

I had occasion to check up on one of these "well-painted" canvases. A critic on an Antipodean journal had hailed a Bouguereau Madonna in those terms and I went to see it. It hung in the museum at Adelaide. All around it hung the great, the eminent, the noble, the polite painters of the nineteenth century—technically flawless, superb practictioners in manual skill. Like them, the Madonna was as empty of æsthetic or religious impact as a decanter is of whiskey in the sixth hour of a wake.

Still, it was "well-painted." Possibly the phrase should be taken to mean thoroughly painted, that is, no spots of bare canvas showing through and no brush hairs stuck in the surface. But as much could be said for the commode in Aunt Elvira's room.

All this is not to say that nobody should talk about painting or about poetry. There are ladies and gentlemen who are at once vigorous, informed and precise, and their dicta are worth listening to, but they number less than a hundred in all the Americas, and it is as much as your life is worth to hear what they're saying. For they are usually encountered accidentally in little salons, and they are not allowed to utter more than a baker's dozen of words without being *spurlos versenkt* in soft coos of agreement or little yaps of argument.

Of the one hundred and twenty million people in these beauteous United States, approximately two thirds of the literate adults are convinced that "the art of conversation is dying," and they have vowed a holy vow that they are, individually, its appointed saviors. Generally their methods suggest the ancient and honorable practise of blood-letting for all diseases including anemia and hemorrhages.

The method chiefly consists in smiling brightly and saying, "Did you see *Vanity Fair* this month?" Nobody has, and a deep silence falls. A bony young man shakes the ash from his Condossis, clears his throat and says, "Uh, I was reading an interesting article on D. H. Lawrence in the *London Mercury* the other. . . ." The chorus breaks in, "Oh, yes. That was in the *Reader's Digest*, wasn't it?" It was. And another deep silence falls. This is broken by a low murmur in the corner. Fred is telling Pete that he tried Whiz Bang Gin Drops in some alcohol the other night and it's a lulu of a drink. Everyone relaxes. The little salon soon buzzes happily in sprightly conversation, studded with the recurrent text: "Was I *tight!*"

This, I maintain, is a normal and decent level for American conversation. The mixing of alcoholic beverages is an American folk art, and in its lore Americans display more original background, more ingenuity, and less patience with the didactic formulæ of quasi-experts than they will ever be able to show in the other arts. In this, no one is merely a spectator. If essence of juniper stained the fingers as a photographer's mixtures do, we should all have hands like Filipinos.

Unfortunately, hosts and their wives start an evening with the firm resolve that we are not going to get onto the subject of drink. They are primed with Sunday feature articles, a few choice segments of *Time*, and an extensive, if vague, acquaintance with three of the six best sellers. They have memorized Royal Cortissoz, F. P. A., Walter Lippmann and Heywood Broun. If they are more energetic than most, they will have assimilated in easy doses a speaking knowledge of the trick devices employed in "King Kong," the real name of Lily Pons, and the "points" of the first editions of Thornton Wilder. The *Scientific American* is also a real help, although it should be hidden in the coat closet before the guests arrive. The weekly and monthly journals which may be left in prominent positions are too well known to require listing.

Extended examination of this subject over a period of painful years indicates that, if there is a single crippling influence on this invalid art of conversation, a single stimulant to the ghastly appetite for post-mortems, it is women. Men have a way of dismissing a play or a book or a movie in one of three or four biological, or barnyard, terms. With women in the audience, however, the same judgment must be expressed in careful and lofty critical intonations.

Our lobbyists and legislators are haggling over small potatoes when they sit in midnight sessions to frame antiseptic beer bills. What they should consider—and Americans should rise as one man to support them—is legislation to forbid for all time the return of the Old Fashioned Salon.

FICTIONS MEN LIVE BY

by T. SWANN HARDING

EVOLUTION, to begin with, is a fiction. It is a postulated theory founded upon very few facts when compared with a theory like that of modern genetics. Yet this fiction greatly agitated dogmatically religious people, probably because it was surreptitiously impregnated with materialistic philosophy. Oddly enough, the much more important and far better founded fictions of genetics were started on their way by a monk to whom the church was from the very start not inhospitable. The man in the street has revolted against the fictions and hypotheses of evolution; those of genetics, while far more destructive of his most cherished beliefs, have left him cold. Yet the idea of evolution is so old that Egyptian mythology represented man as half animal and that many primitive tribes and ancient civilized thinkers had utilized and rather extensively elaborated it.

Genetics is bound to do more to change lay beliefs than the fiction of evolution ever could. The Declaration of Independence says that "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," etc., and in a vague way we still tend to subscribe to this fiction. Not only the man in the street but also Dr. Watson and the late Dr. Dorsey, who had sufficient education, one would think, to know better, have believed that you can get identical results by breeding and rearing two different babies in exactly the same way. Yet scientists know by genetic hypotheses that it is practically impossible to make a paragon of virtue out of a child which came from a long line of thieves, prostitutes, murderers, and imbeciles. However, we so far adhere sufficiently to this outmoded fiction as to prevent our educational system from making sufficient provision for the superior child. So slowly are the new and more comprehensive fictions of science utilized socially that many can still hold the belief that environmental stimuli call forth hereditary responses (the child be marked by its mother's fright, for instance) which we dub a superstition if held by a man in the street, but call "Lamarckism" if held by a biologist.

II.

An example of a pseudo-scientific fiction that is essentially an idle myth may be found in "The Universe Around Us," by Sir James Jeans. Sir James evidently felt that humanity needed another creation myth and he determined to elaborate it. It is questionable whether his exertions were not rather deleterious than otherwise because so many of the people who, a few years ago, believed in the plenary inspiration of "Genesis" are now in the state of mind to believe in the plenary inspiration of Jeans.

Jeans assumes the existence of a primeval chaos, "without form and void." But, without divine assistance, a spinning motion somehow set up in many parts of this chaos. Somehow this motion later increased just sufficiently to form blobs of gas which ejected equatorial projections. Somehow a great inequality caused these whirls to condense and to grow into stars. Somehow the central parts of certain stars became liquid; they began to rotate so fast that fission took place. Occasionally one star would pass so close to another that disruptions would occur and one body would carry away fragments of the other.

Once upon a time, continues Jeans, the sun acted in such a manner on the planets of the solar system, thus producing satellites. This involves the further assumption that their orbits were then very eccentric; that the gas filaments pulled out of the planets by the sun were cigar-shaped; that those pulled out of the sun by the passing star, originally to make the planets, were also cigar-shaped; that some of the planets were originally liquid, others gaseous.

Finally Sir James says, "We may next turn our attention to the physical changes which must all the time be affecting the various planets. The long filament of matter pulled out of the sun is likely to have been the richest in its middle parts, these parts having been pulled out when the second star was nearest and its gravitational pull strongest. Diagramatically at least, we may think of this filament as shaped like a cigar—thick near the middle, thin at the ends, so that when condensations begin to form, those near the middle are likely to be richer than those at the ends. This probably explains why the two most massive planets, Jupiter and Saturn, occupy the middle portion of the sequence of planets . . ." and so on.

Undoubtedly the genius of "Genesis" was both a better mythologist and a better writer than Sir James. He had also the excuse of writing for a primitive people who needed elaborations of pure fiction in their daily life. We of today need most of all the kind of rigid, logical fictions science produces, and the kind of hypotheses science fashions therefrom. Sir James' fiction is and must remain a fiction for one thing because, while, as he says, it explains the mass of Jupiter and Saturn, it does not explain that of Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars, because their masses are in discord with his cigar hypothesis. The elaboration and popular publication of such pure, airy myths of distinguished scientists is an enterprise of very doubtful utility and ethical value in this age.

III.

But how does a true scientist elaborate a fiction by which laymen live at second hand? Turn again to the astronomer.

Sirius was found by Bessell in 1844 to describe an elliptic orbit. He therefore deliberately invented a dark companion star for Sirius to account for his finding, a pure fiction used to "explain" a fact which would not come in under the shelter of the rule. But eighteen years later this dark star was actually seen by Alvin Clark, and was found to emit 1/360th as much light as our sun. It was assumed to be a dying star because it was just red-hot, no more. However, in 1914, Adams at Mt. Wilson discovered it to be white-hot, not red-hot. He therefore concluded that its relatively small total light emission must be caused by its minute size, again a pure fiction. Indeed the star would have to be only about the size of our earth to fulfill the requirements, yet its mass must be imagined to be 4/5ths that of the sun; hence its postulated density became a ton to the cubic inch, if you can imagine that. So far fiction pretty well predominates.

Next Einstein arrived upon the scene. His theory required that the frequency of such emitted radiation as light depended upon both mass and size of the emitting body. He calculated that lines in the spectrum of such emitted light would be shifted toward the red end by an amount exactly proportional to the mass divided by the radius of the emitting body. So Adams measured this spectral value for the companion of Sirius and got indications of a density of 2,000 times that of metallic platinum. Only a few other stars have such densities. They are held, curiously enough, to resemble liquids composed entirely of "stripped" atoms, and a "stripped" atom no longer wears its coat and vest of electrons, but meanders around, a simple nucleus in its shirt sleeves.

In general it may be said the pure fiction of Bessel has almost become a scientific hypothesis. It has been useful and nothing has so far taken place to give it the lie direct. Since it is based upon experimental evidence, it has really become an hypothesis though it started out as a pure fiction.

IV.

No wonder the layman today finds himself perplexed and confused. He cannot even be sure that a famous scientist is not romanticizing when he reads something signed by that scientist. Fictions in wide variety assail him on every hand. In which of these is it prudent for him to invest faith? Many scientists are not only unscientific in their utterances in fields remote from their specialty, but often within the confines of that specialty.

Announcements of all sorts of healing products and devices thus appear couched in pseudo-scientific nomenclature and actually bearing the endorsements of scientists. Recently plain, ordinary lime water, with one part of tap water added, was marketed in pseudo-scientific terms as a most extraordinary "electronized" product effective in a variety of diseases. The announcements stated that it was "not a chemical concoction but strictly a product of electrolytic action. It would be chemically impossible to mix these elements together as separate chemicals, as the operation would only result in an explosion." There were testimonials, not only from credulous believers in this new magical medicine, but actually from scientific workers in the health departments of certain states who declared it "a saline water, the drinking of which may serve several useful and medicinal properties," or who recommended it as a remedy for "sour stomach, diarrhea, dysentery, diabetes, gravel, dyspepsia, etc." Yet is was ordinary lime water in half strength and, while a gallon of the product sold for two dollars, it could be produced for one cent.

So much for ancient magic in the disguise of modern science, becoming a popular fiction of every day life for men to live by, winning the emotional approval of the credulous and the benediction of certain scientific workers as well.

Man is hag-ridden today with myths. He seems irrevocably determined to base his life upon insubstantial fictions. It is necessary that he utilize fictions, of course, because by the very nature of his intellectual capacities absolute, ultimate truth as a terminal experience is forever denied him. But there are many kinds of fictions—beautiful myths, harmless legends, insubstantial and superfluous fictions which, being unrecognized as such, are pernicious in their ultimate effects, rigid scientific fictions which are recognized as such, and experimentally demonstrable scientific hypotheses. There is no rightful place for injurious fictions in a thoroughly modern society. They may be recognized and weeded out only when detected by scientific methods and evaluated by scientific means.

ON A SCRATCH-PAD

by BENJAMIN DeCASSERES

Ancient Fords and Capones.—Some one finds a Neanderthal or Piltdown skull and immediately comes to the conclusion (because it fits in with the Darwinian hypothesis) that it is a far-away subhuman ancestor. What will posterity—in the relatively short space of twenty thousand years—say about us when they dig up the skull of Henry Ford, Hoover or Al Capone? Will they judge Shakespeare, Beethoven or Aldous Huxley by those heads?

* * *

Cash-Down Psyches.—In a book by André Maurois a physician captures the exhaling souls of men just after death in glass tubes. As a utilitarian American I naturally became interested in the uses, financial and social, to which soul-ether can be put. Can it be harnessed to run laundries and steamboats? Why should we let the soul go to waste if it can be used for commercial purposes? What are we Americans on earth for? It is something for us to think over before Stalin grabs the idea for rebuilding Russia. I herewith donate my soul-power, my psychons, at my death, to a common reservoir to run breweries of 8 per cent beer.

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MORALITY

by LLEWELYN POWYS

WHEN we worry about morality, that fanciful topic so closely associated with man's assumed freedom of will, the first thing to be understood is the fact that this tiresome word in its original Latin use denoted nothing more momentous than manners. It was the serpent's wisdom of the priests which first entangled what is our present conception of the word with religious feeling. Religion and ethics in their ultimate origin have little to do with each other. The former is concerned with man's emotional reaction before the miracle of existence, with the wonder that his lonely spirit feels when in a state of heightened awareness it meditates upon the hidden reality behind experience. The other is a mere matter of conduct, the commonplace adjustment of the individual to the arduous restrictions imposed upon him by the exactions of the social contract.

True religion is identical in all races. In its simplest form it is best expressed by the word awe, awe felt before the pageant of eternal matter, awe felt before the profound mystery of life. Morality is a chameleon-like property that takes a fresh color for its skin in every climate and in every age. It consists of submission to expedient rulings devised by each commonwealth for the advantage of its constitution. Its precepts are for the most part framed to curb the actions of forward persons judged to be detrimental to the public good. It has no divine and no metaphysical sanction. Moral codes occasionally coincide in human colonies far removed from each other. This happens because they represent an accumulation of man's work-a-day experience in social agreement and for this reason they have a certain claim upon our attention and deserve to be closely examined before rejection.

It should be remembered, however, when we are disposed to indulge this mood of submissive tolerance, that throughout the generations the legitimate freedom of the individual has been continually subjected to the most arbitrary curtailments for reasons that are often enough sordid and ignoble; for the preservation of private property, for instance, or for the security of certain favored classes.

Those pure moral qualities that especially grace our kind—tenderness, generosity, altruism—had their modest origins in mother love and sexual love. Their beginnings still may be observed at work in the self-effacement of a mother animal, in the courage of a female leopard defending her young, in the fidelity of light-hearted, free-flying birds for their nestlings. In Africa when a herd of impalla are disturbed, the stag will always take up his position at the rear of the stampede, in the place, that is to say, of the greatest danger.

Man's faculty of ethical arbitration is similar to the sensitive mainspring of a clock; and it is about the bland face of this intricate timepiece of human behavior that the hour-hand of civil altruism and the flickering minute-hand of self-realization revolve, the sound working of the machine being dependent upon certain minute proportionate abatements. In human conduct there is no golden rule to follow, always it has been and always it will be a matter for compromise. An infallible decalogue does not exist. The accredited tenets of custom can each one of them be broken under certain circumstances with justice. From the earliest times these commandments have never been taken seriously by free men.

Nature is strong, has sound nerves, and is not troubled by conscience. Selfish behavior, unselfish behavior, it is all one to her, not the difference of a cherry stone. She performs her multiform tasks without hesitation or misgiving, in a state of innocence, apart from all knowledge of good and evil. When a butcher bird transfixes upon the pegs of its larder creatures more sensitive, nature remains indifferent. When a wandering Jew, possessed by a treacherous delusion, sacrifices himself with heroic passion, nature remains utterly unimplicated. For all she knew, the most tragic and significant cry that has ever disturbed a Spring twilight—Eloi, Eloi Lama Sabachthani—might have come from the glutted throat of some hideous hyena crunching the bones of a scrupulous Pharisee in the valley of Jehoshophat.

To her flat ears the frightful murmur that rose from the battle fields of Flanders when bands of regimented primates, with memory and prevision, bit, scratched, and stabbed at each other, was no different from the murmur that rises from a green orchard where boys and girls are dancing to the music of fiddles. The Persian sovereign who, to satisfy his lust for revenge, had silver trays piled high with the eyes of his enemies carried past him from dawn to noon was no more condemned by nature than was John Huss commended. Whether we like it or not, we must accustom our minds to accept the fact that moral action has no philosophic justification and still less a supernatural one. It represents a capricious humor of mankind, it is an artificial toy of their own invention and nothing more. Morality has no tap-root in earth life, of this we may be certain.

Because we should put our sanctimonious convictions under the sharp teeth of the harrow of skepticism, it by no means follows that we advocate the abandonment of all difficult self-control. For the sake of life we must never tire in our fight against stupidity and cruelty. If we are unable to vindicate this attitude with rational arguments we must learn to live, as the Christians teach, by faith. In a last analysis it is simply a matter of taste.

With regard to our personal conduct here and now we must always bear in our minds the doctrine of Epicurus that we are endowed with a modicum of freedom. Make no doubt of it, this blest swerve of the atoms defrauds fate of an absolute sway. Like the cows on Portland we are each of us tethered to our destined post, but within the length of our rope we are free to move where we will. We need not harass ourselves overmuch with the "authoritative impostures" of conventional society. Each of us in accordance with his nature must make a settlement in his own personal life between the claims of self-interest and the claims of service to others, using as his guide far-sighted, foxy calculations as to the probable balance of happiness likely to arise from any particular undertaking.

It is most certain that ultimately nothing matters. There is no pity in the clouds. There exist upon earth, however, sensitive values and gross values and it becomes well-bred spirits to advance the cause of the former as far as is compatible with personal happiness.

THE DECLINE OF LIGHT VERSE

By NEIL TRIMBLE

DURING the six year life span of the old *Masses*, from 1911 to 1917, two literary accouchements took place. The first was *Poetry*, founded by Harriet Monroe in 1912; the second was Margaret Anderson's *Little Review*. Both of these magazines championed causes which rapidly became cults, and one of these cults still exists, although the cause has been forgotten. As soon as the other little magazines noticed the trend they immediately perked up with swollen-necked Communism, radical art and *vers libre*, and became 100 per cent serious in tone. Then something commenced to fade from our literary horizon, and it is still fading. Free verse did not quite drive out serious rhymed verse, but it did, for a time, provide an effective stop-gap for light verse. The ghosts of Lewis Carroll and W. S. Gilbert were laid quietly away. Lazy experimentalists, whose only previous encouragement had come from the ephemeral Bohemian magazines whose repercussions were severely local, suddenly remembered Stephen Crane's "Black Riders" and the magic name of Whitman, and pounced like vultures on the new magazines of expression. The story of the rapid growth of the movement and of its culmination in the successive coronations of T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and e. e. cummings is as familiar as the history of the Republican plague of 1928-32.

Most of the little magazines that appeared before the advent of *Poetry* and *The Little Review* were not too serious and often allotted space for satiric and even occasional nonsense verse. Poets now were practically forced to abandon that medium of expression, since the quality magazines had never bought heavily of light verse. Not that it was at all a question of market. The little magazines seldom, if ever, paid for anything, and the bards, for the most part, barded for the fun of it. But the *Liberator*, which succeeded the old cavorting *Masses*, and the later expatriate publications such as *Broom, Secession, transition, This Quarter* and Pound's *Exile*, had no room for anything except tragic groans in *vers libre*.

What a contrast we find in the magazines of thirty-five to forty years ago! There was *Puck*, edited by Bunner, *Mlle. New York*, with Huneker as one of its stars, the *Chap Book*, Burgess' *Lark*, *The Yellow Book*, *Cosmopolis*, and a host of big and little magazines, most of them eagerly receptive to the work of such technical experts as Richard Hovey, Guy Wetmore Carryl, Bliss Carman, Oliver Herford and Gelett Burgess, as well as lesser figures such as Kenyon Cox, John Kendrick Bangs, Charles F. Lummis and Carolyn Wells. How much of their product do we remember and quote today aside from the well-milked "Purple Cow?" Unless one is a literary historian or a collector of first editions, one is probably acquainted only with the caudal examples, such as Riley's threnody to the outhouse and Field's "When Willie Wet The Bed,"—things of the type that are reprinted by the leg-and-chemise magazines.

Today? Well, there are a few (a very few) who amuse and entertain occasionally. For instance, Morris Bishop, Arthur Lippmann, E. B. Crosswhite and that wholesaler of jingles, Berton Braley, who evidently operates on a yearly contract basis with the *Saturday Evening Post*. And we must not forget the shrinking Samuel Hoffenstein and the ubiquitous Dorothy Parker

But we must still admit, much as we may dislike to, that our best practising technician is Ogden Nash, even when it is apparent that all his tricks were used by Hovey, Carryl and others nearly forty years ago. In Hovey's "Don Juan" (*Smart Set*, Nov. 1900) are found Nash's own rhymes—"please men" with "policemen", "Ellinor" with "hell in her," "satyriasis" with "your bias is," and even the Nashian distortion of spelling in "Lucifer" with "crucifer." Nash must have carelessly read Carryl's "Grimm Tales Made Gay," because he was once guilty of rhyming "wittier" with "Whittier" and overlooking Carryl's redeeming pun. But the imitator has been flattered in turn. One of his early satellites was Margaret Fishback, who now has moved into an orbit of her own and writes capable verse in carload lots. She has reformed, but there are plenty of others who have not. A contributor to one of the leading humorous magazines recently copied, almost word for word, two of Nash's verses.

Of writers of nonsense verse there are today none to compare with Carryl, Herford, Burgess, Cox and Carolyn Wells. Carolyn Wells, Herford and Burgess are, I believe, still with us, but the fact that they no longer write intentional nonsense shows either that they are incapable of doing it any longer or that the public taste has changed.

GRIM FOLLIES OF A MINOR COURT

by ELEANOR ROWLAND WEMBRIDGE

THERE is often a fantastic drama in the workings of a minor court that is missing in the sessions devoted to the major crimes. If a knife, let us say, has entirely severed someone's jugular vein, the criminal court meets the episode with all the gravity appropriate to the abrupt thrust of a soul into eternity. Lawyers, judges, witnesses, police, are summoned. Oaths are administered, precedents consulted, sentences pronounced. The outcome may result in another fatality added to the first, but at least life and death are taken seriously. Murder is accorded its due respect. Let us suppose, however, that the knife, flung with an equally savage passion, but less accurate aim, misses its target's neck and, glancing sidewise against the stove, falls harmlessly into the wood-box. Half an inch has removed the incident from the august consideration of the higher courts to an obscure hearing, where a fine or a scolding takes the place of a cell or the electric chair. In both cases murder was in the air. But the deflected blade has turned the affair from the grim to the grotesque. There is something almost more disturbing to one's moral sense about the undervaluation of the knife that did not meet its mark than in the ominous appraisal of the one that did!

In my modest chambers—I am the referee of the Juvenile Court of Cuyahoga County, Ohio—there is no warning ahead of what wild mischief I am to consider. There cannot be much fore-knowledge of minor cases. One moment, let us say, I have never heard of Vennie, her half-sister, her grandfather, and the barber who lodges in the hall. After fifteen minutes, with no grandeur of the law invoked (because Vennie is a poor shot), I know more about them all than anyone should know, except possibly their doctor and their confessor. Old scandals, jealousies and reprisals are chattered to me by Vennie, her sister, and the barber, while grandpa shakes his head and says it isn't so. No one this side of doomsday will discover which is right.

Vennie's story is that the fight started over an uncalled-for comment by the barber as to the virtue of the half-sister's grandmother. Words passed and Vennie picked up the knife and threw it, in order to forestall being choked by the barber. The neighbors heard the noise and sent for the police. But, when the patrol wagon arrived, no one was visible but the panting barber, reading his newspaper by the stove. He protested that there had been no trouble, merely a friendly chat, and that the family had gone up-stairs at peace with all the world, including him. He believed them to be on the roof. "Why the roof?" I inquired of the grandfather. "To escape the barber?" "Oh no," explained the old gentleman blandly. "On the roof to shoot pigeons!" Nothing could budge any of them from this statement. If Vennie had tossed her weapon with a more practised hand, she would have made the front page as a major criminal. Because her aim was poor, the affair has dwindled to a family party playfully shooting pigeons on the roof at midnight, and with Vennie and her erstwhile hated barber quite obviously engaged in a flirtation.

It seems shocking that crime missed by so narrow a margin should turn burlesque. The collapse of the combat into this anti-climax is almost more monstrous than the barber in the morgue!

Often real calamity develops before our eyes, yet, though we foresee it, we are helpless to prevent it. There was Aggie Lou, who presented herself to the police with a grave complaint against her brother-in-law, which bore all the ear-marks of truth. No child of thirteen could have invented such shocking charges, nor was there any motive for her doing so. All the investigators agreed that her story was true. She was ministered to, her mother summoned, and the two met with sobs. But after the interview a new glint appeared in the eye of Aggie Lou. She insisted that her brother-in-law was a good kind man, and that all the stories she had told were lies. She was vague as to her motives in inventing such monstrosities, but persisted in her statements that she had done so.

As the family filed in for the hearing, I had to stare hard even to recognize them. The father, with oiled hair and a glistening new gold tooth, was resplendent in a tan overcoat, while the mother was draped in green satin with glass beads. Aggie Lou sat beside them, with a ticket to Chicago in her hand; and the brother-in-law, fat, sleek and silent, eyed me with a covert smile. At our first meeting, the family was being fed by charity. Today, Aggie Lou had a long shopping list, and feared to miss the train because of it. "Where did all this money come from?" I demanded in futile wrath, though I knew very well. "That man paid all of you to change your story," I insisted, in shrill contrast to the composed father, who murmured that he had "friends," and the confident brother-in-law, who smiled and gazed out of the window. Aggie Lou grasped her ticket and reiterated faintly, "No one done nothing to me." What higher court has time or patience for the tremulous falsehoods of children? As for Aggie Lou's family, what is a daughter's virtue compared to the tangible benefits of a fawn-colored overcoat and a green satin dress? Such gifts are not to be despised by those who live on charity. So the fat brother-in-law waddles out, with the serene composure of a philanthropist who scatters sunshine—and Aggie Lou, despite our best efforts, travels happily off to her destruction.

Occasionally a frail creature epitomizes in herself every conceivable mischance. One such drifted into our court-room, young, sick and pregnant. Her mother was dead, her father had long since deserted, and her one-time admirer had departed, leaving not only his victim but a wife and two children. He had no money and was literally not worth the energy necessary to track him down, even if we had known his last name, which the girl could not recall. His first was Frog. I gazed at the bedraggled little wretch in helpless despair, then asked, "What do you *want?* If I knew what you really wanted, there might be some chance of getting it." She smiled. But, accustomed as I should be by now to whimsies and lunacies, I was startled by her answer. "I want a green and black bathroom," she murmured.

"A green and black bathroom?" I echoed, staring.

"Yes. I saw a picture of one once, and it had a black tub. I want a green and black bathroom with a black tub!"

I fell back, inadequate to her bright vision. I could only mutter, "I am sorry. I have no black tub," as she was ushered to an obscure bed, and thence I know not where. On the lowest rung of the human ladder. Yet, her only smile was at the dream-picture of a glittering bathroom and an inky tub.

I insist that such encounters in the humble sessions of a minor court make a heavier drain on one's social philosophy than a concourse of the League of Nations.

THE OTHER SIDE OF PARADISE

By VERNON C. SHERWIN

THE peninsula of Florida protrudes from the southeastern corner of the United States into the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean like an index finger dipped into a tepid bath. To varied thousands, ranging from tin-can tourists in house-cars and khaki breeches to harried Crœsuses who feel they are no longer able to relax in the spas of southern Europe, the state is just that: a warm bath made attractively warmer by cheap and convenient highballs.

A native, however, gazing pensively at a map of his state is more likely to be reminded of one of the pendulous mammæ of a range cow, the islands dripping into the Gulf from the southernmost end of the state representing the last drops of milk grudgingly released by an animal ripe for the abattoir. Alcoholically the state is wet enough; economically it has been milked dry.

Laying claim to the oldest settlement in the Union, Florida might well be expected to have attained a maturity incompatible with a double life, but such is not the case. The triangle of the old lady's girlish senility has at its apex the freeborn white native, who roams the northern and western reaches of the state, the Cracker, who controls her political destinies and looking after such morals as still survive.

Perhaps no state in the Union displays so great a contrast as exists between north and south Florida. The differences are cultural, moral and ethnological. The southern section of Florida, given over to the entertainment of tourists and the cult of the sun, is ruled in the main by an immigrant Babbittry, attracted by the fantastic paper profits made in real estate speculation in 1925 and 1926. In the vicinity of Miami and other tourist centres there are overtones of a cosmopolitan culture visible through the fog of go-getters and boosters but, as is always true where numerical greatness is confused with progress, the enlightened few are sadly in the minority and lead, at best, a life of vicarious pleasure.

In more prosperous days concert artists of the first water were brought into Miami and Orlando by a venturesome entrepreneur and once, during the height of his fad, the Spanish painter Zuloaga mildly shocked the good ladies of the former city with an exhibition of his nudes. Of late, however, appreciation of the arts appears to be in the doldrums. Kreisler and Heifetz fiddle no more on Miami's shore, and the Spaniard was the last painter heard of in the land. The composer Mana-Zucca, married to the former owner of a Miami department store, is making a conscientious effort to keep interest alive in music in the Magic City and the Civic theatre carries on, but with difficulty.

That the love of beautiful letters is not dead is evidenced by a virulent rash of poets which has broken out in the state during the past few years. Euterpe and Erato are wooed by such unexpected aspirants as policemen and matrons of homes for the poor, and the appalling results are published in an anthology of Florida poets. Published, that is, after the poetasters subscribe for ten copies of the volume at two dollars each.

In the main however, Babbittry is in the saddle in south Florida, and any surplus energy these enterprising gentlemen may possess is expended in a valiant effort to avoid payment of the overburdening load of bonded indebtedness contracted during the real estate boom, without using the opprobrious term "repudiation." In the city of West Palm Beach their efforts have resulted in the bondholders forcing a tax levy of 450 mills on an already bankrupt populace. No man can predict the outcome of this unheard of tax rate. It remains to be seen whether property owners will abandon the town site or rise in revolt. Only one thing is certain: few, if any, of the property holders can pay any such amount as the levy will entail this year.

II

The northern and western stretches of the state, with their sweatboxes and other penal atrocities, present a far different picture. There the towns remain uncontaminated by Yankee emigrés and the land is given over to agriculture rather than subdivisions. The arts are not only neglected, they are unheard of. Popular relaxation takes the form of communal barbecues, an occasional lynching bee flogging, and the quadrennial elections.

Jacksonville, considered the leading city of the state by everyone except Miamians, was the scene of the highly publicized sweatbox murder trial in the Summer of 1932, which resulted in a twenty-year sentence for a prison camp boss but has as yet brought no startling reforms in the penal system of the state. The publicity given to the revolting details of this murder of a young convict from New Jersey was probably a contributing factor to the conviction. Had there been any real feeling in the state against the brutal treatment of convicts, the case of Martin Tabor, beaten to death in a prison camp more than six years ago, should have provided sufficient warning that a reform was in order.

More recently five men were acquitted on charges of flogging several men and women in Jacksonville, despite positive identification. Convenient relatives and lodge brothers provided alibis for the defendants. Although more than twenty-five Jacksonville men and women reported to the police that they had been abducted and beaten with heavy straps last year, no arrests, other than the five mentioned above, have been made. Most of the victims stated they were warned against frequenting "disorderly houses and living in the Negro district of the city."

Among the onerous duties willingly shouldered by the politically-minded Cracker is that of custodian of the moral and spiritual welfare of his fellow citizens. In the field of endeavor he is aided and abetted in the resort section of the state by as able and active a crew of non-indigenous whoopers up as is to be found outside of Kansas.

III

The geographical position of the commonwealth makes Florida ideal not only for the hard-drinking, sun-loving Pan worshippers; the place is also a sort of pre-paradise for arthritic clergymen from all points of the compass. While the actinic rays of the Winter sun draw the swelling from their joints, they lick their Christian chops as they contemplate the appalling moral turpitude of less God-fearing visitors. Where else, this side of Paradise, if even there, may a Servant of God lie in the heliotherapic atmosphere of a populous beach, simultaneously ridding himself of rheumatic twinges and preparing a sermon on the devilish seductiveness of the one-piece bathing suit?

Do the business men of the resorts demand a liberal interpretation of the statutes as an attraction to free-spending visitors? Then a pack of amateur and professional bluenoses are on their trail, shouting and praying for strict enforcement of the puritanical regulations of antebellum days, including Sunday closing laws for every institution except, of course, the church.

Do the tourists ask for dog and horse racing? Then the Crackers of the state legislature convene with palms conveniently upturned, equally ready for a *pourboire* or a prayer. There was considerable speculation among residents when the Florida legislature, after many refusals, suddenly legalized pari-mutuel betting under a local option law, after winking at illicit oral betting for five years.

Two years earlier the same august body had hitched up its galluses and fled precipitately, spraying the adjacent scenery with a fine jet of Brown's Mule en route, when a Miami racing promoter descended on the capital with the announcement that he was prepared to buy up the whole assemblage, body and soul, in the interests of legalized gambling.

By a God-given act of wisdom on the part of some early Solon, the state legislature is allowed to convene only once in two years. Thus was facilitated another two years of illegal gambling at the tracks before a group of less garrulous promoters could visit the boys at Tallahassee and make them see the light. This time there was no vulgar talk of a headright for representatives. The conversation was confined to betting for public, rather than private, revenue, and a local option gambling bill went through. Governor Carlton vetoed the bill, but, so convinced had the legislators become that racing for revenue would prove to be the state's salvation, that the bill was passed over his veto. So after six years it became legal to back one's judgment on the relative speed of thoroughbreds at the track, but it remains to this day a felonious offense to do the same thing in a bookmaking establishment downtown.

The snoopers wailed and beat their breasts and predicted disaster for a state so far gone in sin, but their law-giving colleagues went placidly to their homes, content in the knowledge that their flea-bitten counties would get an equal share of racing profits.

Since the legalization of pari-mutuel betting, ministers of the Gospel have had to content themselves with harassing slot-machine operators, gaudy women and other such small fry, but the resort cities still present probably the most inspiring field for the reformer to be found in the land.

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THE CONTROL OF SEX

by CALVIN B. BRIDGES

THE problem of how to have the baby a boy was of considerable importance to King X, whom Providence had blessed with five daughters in a row. There was nothing he could do about it, and possibly there isn't yet, although at the recent Third International Congress of Genetics a Doctor Sanders made a report concerning some experiments conducted by a colleague in which a nearly uniform production of boys followed the feeding to the mother of an alkali (sodium bicarbonate) during a critical period before conception. And, conversely, a great preponderance of daughters was reported to follow the administration of lactic acid.

Whether or not the sex ratio in man can be controlled, laboratory experiments with the small fly *Drosophi Melanogaster* have shown that in this form at any rate the ratio of the sexes in families can be governed by genetical means to an astonishing extent. So far, however, no chemical treatment of environmental conditions has modified the sex-ratio significantly.

The genetical methods of controlling the sex-ratio in the case of the fly mentioned consist in the main of killing in the egg, or early larval stages, of individuals of one or the other sex. The killing is accomplished by the transmission to certain individuals in the family of definitely inherited character changes. These characteristics differ from the other characteristics, known as inherited traits, in this fly only in the more devastating and immediate effect upon the ability to live. For example, the inherited characteristic of white eyes may appear in half of the sons of a certain family, but the white eye does not harm the recipient of it. Hence no more of these white-eyed sons than of the normal red-eyed sons die. So the sex-ratio remains what is normal for this species: one to one. But other inherited characters, instead of being harmless, may be very harmful. Thus, a certain inherited character consists in the transformation of certain organs of the very young larva into rounded masses of black cells, very similar in their manner of growth and in their fatal effects to the malignant melanotic cancers found in man. Since in these families one half of the sons receive this character and one of the daughters receive it, half of the sons are eliminated and the family shows the reduced sex-ratio of only fifty sons to each one-hundred daughters.

We know the explanation for this curious type of inheritance, whereby a given character appears in half of the sons of a family and in none of the daughters. It is because sex itself is determined by the existence in the cells of the body of a growing larva of one, or conversely of two, particular chromosomes called the x-chromosomes. A larva with one x-chromosome is a male and a larva with two becomes a female. When a female makes and lays eggs, each egg contains the one or the other of these two x chromosomes. In the case of the male, when he forms sperms, half of the sperms receive his x-chromosome, while the other half of the sperms are left without an x-chromosome. Fertilization of the eggs, each of which has an x-chromosome, by the two kinds of sperm results in two kinds of larvæ, those with two x-chromosomes becoming females and those with one x-chromosome—the other half—becoming males. The result is that normally as many sons as daughters are produced.

II

In the case of characters such as white-eyes and the fatal cancers, the particular bit of chemical called a gene, which results in the white-eyed instead of the red-eyed condition, is a part of this sex-determining x-chromosome. A female that has this specific gene in one only of her two x-chromosomes is able to live, since she does not develop the cancer. But those males which have this cancer-bearing x-chromosome only, since they are not protected by a second and normal x-chromosome, develop the cancer and die from its effects. By combinations of certain of these death-producing genes with certain other ones, half of the sons can be killed by one of them and the other half by the other. Hence, families consisting only of daughters can be raised. If families consisting of a very few sons and many daughters are desired, they can be obtained by combining particular ones of these male-eliminating genes with particular other ones from our large selection of death-dealing genes.

Reciprocally, genes are known whose peculiarity of action causes death to daughters and not to sons.

Not only can the scale of sex-ratios be run from one extreme to the other in families, but individuals can be produced which, in themselves, are combinations of male and female in various but specific proportions. Thus, one individual can be entirely and sharply female throughout the left side of its body and just as sharply male throughout the right side. Since the male is only about two-thirds as large as the female, the combination is ludicrously curved—he being the string to her bow. In other cases, approximately a quadrant of the joint body is male. In many cases, half of the head is male and half female. In such instances the fly may exhibit a mixed libido. The tail region containing the testes or ovaries may have more effect on the sex behavior than the head region, as evidenced by "their" pursuit of females or "their" being pursued by males.

In other experiments, besides the two fixed points of maleness and femaleness, the interval between can be filled by a whole series of individuals, each being a definite intermediate or inter-sex between maleness and femaleness. In these intersexes, the sex constitution of every cell in the body is intermediate. But in the developmental process, the organs become more female-like in appearance than in the standard male, and the proportion of organs thus becoming female-like determines the grade of inter-sex. Again, the maleness of all the organs may be accentuated to give a series of super-male individuals. Conversely, the scale of sexes can be extended in the opposite direction to a series of super-females. Thus, the entire range between extreme super-females through standard females, inter-sexes of different degrees, standard males and thence on to the extreme of super-males, is producable on demand.

Do you want a moral? If so, here it is: Work relatively as long with the study of heredity in man as has been done in the heredity of flies, and then, if you wish, like results can be produced in man.

IN PRAISE OF COOKERY

by HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

WHEN I was very young, I, like all other well-behaved little Dutch boys, was regularly dragged to a bare and dreary room, atrociously ventilated and adorned with a few antiquated maps of Palestine, where I was soundly instructed in the history of the ancient Hebrews according to the views of Dr. John Calvin, late prophet-in-extraordinary to the patient people of the town of Geneva, Switzerland. Every lesson was full of "burnt offerings" which, according to our excellent Dominie, had been so acceptable to the nostrils of the Great Jehovah that he had preferred them to all other visible forms of homage.

Now the Dutch expression for "burnt offering" was "smelly offering" but the word "smelly" was used in the old sense of "perfumed"—in other words, it indicated a more or less agreeable smell. Being, even then, rather empirically inclined, I decided one day to play the rôle of Jehovah and to arrange such an offering according to the best Hebrew precepts and then enjoy those pleasures which had so delighted the olefactory organs of the Great Master of the Divine Tantrums, for whom, in those days, I had a profound if awesome respect.

On the plea that I wanted to give Philax an extra treat (Philax was a fat and wheezy pug-dog, now gone the way of all pug-dogs) I obtained a few odds and ends of meat from our family butcher. In the back of the garden I had erected an altar according to the specifications as found in Exodus XX:24—good wet earth and a few flat stones, carried to our low country a million years before by an obliging Scandinavian glacier and never polluted by the touch of a human hammer.

I had carefully refrained from constructing any steps, "that my nakedness be not discovered thereon," because I failed to know what that meant. All decent little Dutch boys wore pants and their nakedness was never discovered unless they got spanked, and surely one would not get spanked for building an altar according to Exodus XX: 24. I had neither "sheep nor oxen" but I had a large plate-full of their choicest entrails and old newspapers would provide me with fuel. The fuel question rather worried me. Exodus XX was silent on that point. But I had been careful to collect a large number of copies of the *Dutch Church News*—a wondrous gazette consisting exclusively of announcements about forthcoming sermons and "help wanted" ads. for the benefit of ladies who wished to avail themselves of the services of a decent, self-respecting Protestant cook in exchange for forty dollars a year, full washing and tips—and I felt certain that out of respect for the word "church" Jehovah would overlook any possible minor errors connected with the actual process of combustion.

I had a vague notion that holy offerings should be brought while the suppliant was still in a state of pre-prandial sobriety, a possible remnant of the days when my ancestors had worshipped in a somewhat different temple, and so, early one morning, I sneaked out of the house and set fire to the contraption. It stank to high Heaven. Pardon the use of this homely Anglo-Saxon expression but "smell" and "odor," "emanation" and "fume" are entirely too mild to describe the ensuing stench.

It was Summer and the pole-cat fragrance rolled in heavy waves toward the house and caused several members of the family to arise in haste and to inquire whether the cow-barn was on fire. The gardener, with a bucket of water, made an end to all my further experiments in applied holiness. My parents, sound Voltairians, who had sent me to my weekly catechism not in a spirit of piety but in order to have me out of the house for an extra couple of hours, frowned severely upon this unwelcome and wholly unsuspected manifestation of an interest in outworn "prejudice and superstition."

I escaped further punishment by a most solemn vow that henceforth I would not take the sacred writings either too seriously or too literally, one of the few promises I have kept to this day without any serious infringements, and that was the last of my efforts along the line of empirical ancient-testamentary testimony.

II

A few years later, when entering the glorious portals of immortal Homer, I was slightly shocked to discover that the Greek Gods had also been devotees of the hideous smell of fried meat. By that time, Jehovah had become a slightly ridiculous and wholly antiquated patriarch, vaguely reminiscent of those hoary-bearded rabbis who would pass through our streets whenever the Little Father of the great Russian plains had indulged in another little pogrom, when vast hordes of bewhiskered and be-draggled ghetto-folk would come scurrying through our streets in search of the blessed ships that were to carry them to the Promised Land on the other side of the broad Atlantic Ocean.

The Olympians, on the other hand, men and women of the world, with their serious devotion to all outdoor sports and their amorous adventures that smacked of the French funny papers, were as modern as this evening's Extra, and it seemed absolutely incongruous that they too should have asked their worshippers to refresh and delight them with the vapors of slowly smouldering carcasses. But Homer's words allowed of no mistake. Nectar and ambrosia sounded most impressive. When our zoölogy teacher showed us the mummified remnants of the ambrosian beetle (a rare American import) which had derived its name from the strange habit of cultivating a juicy fungus inside the bark of trees as a special delicacy for its promising young larvae, the last vestiges of my former respect for the Jovian bill-of-fare disappeared as completely as my erstwhile fear of the late Jehovah. I came to the definite conclusion that the tastes of our ancestors must have been very different from our own, and I let it go at that.

No doubt a hundred years hence, one of my full-fed great grandchildren, in writing in *The American Spectator* of 2033 about his antiquarian experiments with a Roosevelt-steak smothered in onions, will express a similar devastating dislike for the delicacies which now grace our domestic tables. For the perfume of today is the insufferable stench of tomorrow, and the same food which made Charlemagne ask for a fifth helping would be merely kennel-ration to the gourmet of 1933, and would only remind him of that cup of luke-warm tea mixed with rancid goat-butter which his delighted host had urged upon him when he was forced to take shelter in the house of a Tibetan lama.

Whosoever doubts my words is politely requested to make a culinary voyage of discovery through the metropolis in which I am writing these words, to wit, the city of New York, the greatest renaissance village of our modern world, the sublime crazy-quilt of all nations, all races, all tribes and all clans, which has a larger variety of truly "regional" restaurants than any other town on this or any other planet. Being myself of an almost incredible conservatism in the matter of "taste" (the kitchen of my childhood was excellent but almost as restricted as that of the rice-fed babies of India), I humbly partake of bread and butter and the wings of some defunct chicken, while my friends delve deep into the hidden delights of some Turkish, Armenian or Hindu mess. But everything man ever ate, should eat or should refrain completely from eating, from the succulent fingers of the octopus *(cepholopoda vulgaris)* to the hundred-year-old eggs of the Chinese are there for the asking.

Whale-meat is no longer a rare delicacy since Sears-Roebuck undertook to preserve it and distribute it *en gros*. But the edible birds' nests of the Javanese cliffs, all the snails that ever delighted the Gallic whiskers of our late allies and associates, and the fried lambs' eyes of the Kurdistan highlands are available for the benefit of the true connoisseur.

III

An article like this is not easy to write. The classical tradition of the American philosophy of life is very decidedly opposed to the idea of paying too much attention to what one eats. Like a too great proficiency at billiards, a too profound familiarity with the doctrines of Brillat-Savarin has ever been considered an indication of a misspent youth. The stern Calvinistic deities of the Founding Fathers insisted that one swallow whatever was put "before one" as if it were part of the doctrine of infant damnation or trans-substantiation. The fact (a contributory fact of economic origin) that the greater part of all our domestic cooks during half a century were recruited from among the race that had never learned to prepare a more elaborate dish than stew and boiled potatoes made matters worse. Irish cooking may have done wonders for Sinn Féin, but that is about all I can say in its favor.

For a short space of time, a ray of hope illumined the culinary sky of our fair land. As long as New Orleans was the capital of a separate empire, the influence of Bechamel and Vatel and of the Duc de Richelieu (the human benefactor who discovered mayonnaise) made itself felt among the dusky chieftains who held sway in the kitchens of the cotton and slave magnates. But Grant, who was a heavy and indiscriminate feeder, conquered Lee, who knew the difference between eating and dining, and during the scramble for riches that followed upon our domestic Night of St. Bartholomew, the noble art of cooking fell upon evil days.

A menu of the Seventies and Eighties reads like a sermon of Cotton Mather. There was a lot of it, but only the strongest constitution could hope to survive these cannibal feasts of our sovereigns by the grace of oil and coal and iron.

Gradually, however, when bigger and better vessels made a trip across the the ocean a little less of a torment than it had been during the days of Charles Dickens and Anthony Trollope, our hardy pioneers of good living and clear thinking ventured forth once more into that distant but delectable wilderness of Europe which had nourished (in more ways than one) the founders of the Great Republic. Thirty years ago New York and an increasing number of American cities had a large variety of restaurants as good as any that were to be found in Paris or Vienna or Warsaw.

Came the dusk of the Eighteenth Amendment. The embattled nay-sayers, the disinherited folk of the sterile New England farms, now grown rich among the fertile opulence of the mid-western wheat-farms, taking a premature leaf out of the book of the Bolshevists, started upon their little career of spiritual and material confiiscation. They deprived (without compensation) the brewer of his malt vats and overnight they destroyed the California vintners to make a Chicago holiday for the gangster and the grafter. As a by-product of their fury, they forced all our first rate French chefs to return to the land of their nativity. "For how," asked the worthy gentlemen, and quite justly, "can one cook without wines, without Madeira, and without sherries of diverse and rare vintages?"

The deserted ruins of our glorious gastronomic edifice were at once occupied by the hygiene-hawkers. The old sauce-pans and the copper cauldrons of the departed Gauls were filled with vitamines (A, B, C) and calories (D, E. F) and the din of the "balanced diets" resounded nightly through the cavernous caravanseries, where solemn-faced and sterilized attendants operated upon us for our appetites, without paying the slightest attention to the æsthetic necessities of our long-suffering souls.

The last straw came when cellophane was invented. The food that was then thrown at us was guaranteed "never to have been touched by human hands." "God help us! No human hands should ever have touched it. It was fit only for those contented and happy cows who were producing ten pints of milk on only four cubes of highly compressed alfalfa.

IV

I am in great hopes these days. Another year of the Depression and we shall be a happy nation. Instead of devoting all our wakeful hours to the main problem of how to make a living, we may be also tempted to try and discover how to live. We are still a long way from the times of Louis the Well-Beloved, who bestowed the blue ribbon of the Royal Order of the Holy Spirit upon the first French female cook who had demonstrated that she knew her onions quite as well as most of her male competitors. But soon we may begin to realize that a single sardine in the hands of an artist has more nutritious virtues than a dozen Porterhouse steaks maltreated by an indifferent pot-walloper in a Pullman kitchen, and that the making of a perfect omelet is quite as difficult and just as deserving of high praise as the construction of a new gearless car. Instead of a peppy lunch of ice-cold half-and-half, followed by a pint of cream-smothered coffee and an ounce of bicarbonate, we once more may devote a couple of hours to the noon-time meal, though it may cost us only fifty cents and may offend against all the laws of the dietary specialists.

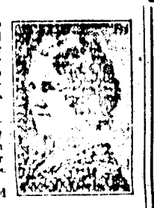
We have the experience of twenty centuries at our elbows. We can draw upon the entire universe for our raw materials, for the stuff is almost being given away these days. The refrigerator has done away with waste. The bilious, high-powered executive has gone the way of the Russian grandees and the Dodo. At last we have a clear field.

The subject is so vast that one must either write a ponderous tome or a very short essay. The lack of space demands the short essay. Do not consider these remarks, oh reader, as the last word upon a topic that may mean life and death to you. Rather take it as a little appetizer, a humble *hors d'œuvre*, to your own resolution to be done with mere feeding, to eschew the ways of the gourmand, the stuffing glutton, and to practice the arts of the gourmet, the amiable connoisseur of the good things of this earth, which it has pleased Almighty Heaven to place at our disposal, in such multifarious and multivariant abundance.

During the Crimean War when, because of a hopelessly mismanaged commissary department, the allies outside of Sevastopol were reduced to a meagre daily ration of a few mildewed beans, the *chef de cuisine* of General Canrobert invented a Pudding *à la Malakoff*, which kept the French armies in high spirits, while the British groused away on their murderous diet of soggy, boiled beans.

Out of the present mess there may arise a Bread Pudding *à la Franklin Delano* which shall make coming generations regard the Depression as the beginning of our culinary redemption. Let us pray!

Extra Money



Mae L. Harland
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EXEGESIS

By BURTON RASCOE

THE Apostolic Fathers were wise and inspired and learned in many matters, but they were very short-sighted in one thing: they failed to realize that, although a healthy disagreement of opinion is a salutary way of arriving at the true (or the expedient) in council, it works havoc when this disagreement is expressed in a canon.

When these pious and argumentative fathers of the Christian church established the canon of the New Testament some three hundred and fifty years after the birth of Jesus, the Christ, they included in this canon of their faith—as we know—four distinct biographies of Jesus, the first three differing so much from the Fourth Gospel as to seem to have been written about two quite different men.

This was a much worse thing for them to have done (from a humane, religious or rational point of view) than it would have been for the delegates to the General Convention in Philadelphia in 1787 to have given us Four Federal Constitutions of the United States of America, all bound up together, each reflecting in considerable degree the disharmony of the peculiar casts of mind entertained by members of the assembly.

Confusion and chaos would have been upon us (even before now) if we had four Constitutions, each one held to be inviolate and the first and last letter of the law we were to live by. And schisms and heresies, bloody religious wars and persecutions, inquisitions and inhumanities have followed upon the fact that the bishops and presbyters of the new religion, after the Council of Nicea, could not agree upon an authentic biography (among the many they had) and so gave the Christians four quite different ones as canonical, none of which was to be doubted or disbelieved by the faithful under pain of excommunication or worse, usually worse.

When an ingenuous rational human being is asked to believe two opposed ideas concurrently under pain of damnation or death he is, usually, for a time, quite at a loss to make up his mind. He would like to believe, but he cannot believe two things that cancel each other. He may be ready to believe that "black is white" or "white is black," but such are the simple processes of his mind, he cannot believe that "black is white," "white is black," "white is white" and "black is black" all at the same time. These gymnastics of credulity are beyond him.

If he is of a cunning and deceptive nature, used to keeping counsel with himself against the outrageous furies of an entrenched, coercive and powerful majority, he will give lip service (in order to escape the rack, or in order to exist in peace, or in order to keep intact his immortal common sense and self-respect) to whatever nonsense is desperately required of him; and he will deepen daily in a cynicism toward the motives, minds and good intentions of all people who insist that other people believe and act exactly as they do.

If, on the other hand, he is at once a credulous and deductive creature, he will figure out that one of the two combative notions he is asked to believe in is the right one. And he will defend his conviction against all the forces combined against him. When this happens it is considered (long after it occurs and when poets and historians with poetical turns of mind begin to deal with the episode) to be a dispensation full of grandeur; but, nevertheless, it is an unpleasant incident, from both the physical and psychical point of view, to the martyr who is undergoing it. I have never been fed to the lions or had my limbs stretched on the rack or had my tongue pulled out by red-hot tongs or been burnt at stake, but I am quite, quite sure that I shouldn't enjoy any of these exhibitions of grandeur.

And I don't believe that any one else, who is not mentally deficient, has. Gavrillo Princep, who plunged us into a world war by his antic at Sarajevo, undoubtedly acted from what, to him, were the highest motives; Czolgosz was proud to die for having murdered the amiable, incompetent and well-thought-of henchman of Mark Hanna, and his reasons must have seemed perfectly valid to him: and Giuseppe Zangara was pleased to burst into the limelight and have his pitiable, drab spirit extinguished forever by firing shot at President Roosevelt which killed Mayor Cermak of Chicago.

We do not permit ourselves to believe that these madmen were quite right in their minds. That is to say, they were not right in *our* minds. But, at this distance, we *may* concede that the poor devils who gathered in the catacombs and on the campagna of Rome to worship a proscribed religion and were burnt at the stake or thrown to the lions for having done so, are martyrs deserving of our gratitude and of whatever sentimental reveries we can entertain toward them, whenever the incident is brought to our attention by historians or novelists or poets, whose work we happen to be reading while our wives are cooking dinner or when there is no good program on the radio.

One wonders what the gratitude of the present pope of the Holy Roman Catholic Church (baptised Achille Ratti in Desio, Italy, in 1857—he has a vested as well as a fiduciary reason for being grateful to the martyrs), or the gratitude of Wolfgang Lumpenspiegel of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, or the gratitude of James-Jacques Aloysius Smith of Chickasha, Oklahoma, or the gratitude of Burton Rascoe of Larchmont, New York, means then, or now, to a young woman with a beautiful body and an energetic mind who was drawn by some emotional need (or because she had some splendid lover who could not earn a living under the economic inequalities of the reign of that debauched and moronic swine, Commodus, and had taken up this promising Christian faith in a last desperate hope and had converted her to it) into an outlawed sect and had, in expiation, when caught and rounded up with other persons denounced by the police as Christians, been tied naked to a stake and burned for the sadistic pleasure of a drunken populace of the precise sort which enjoys a marathon dance or likes to throw pop bottles at an infielder who misses a grounder or at an umpire who gives an instantaneous decision (as, by rule, he must) when the decision is doubtful to other, prejudiced, eyes.

She, that lovely girl whom I see now agonizing in the flames, *may* have felt exaltation in her extremity. I have seen the coldest-blooded murderers on the death march to the scaffold singing hymns of the faith she died for—such is the dispensation of Providence or of a beneficent God or of a kindly jailer with a hypodermic syringe, which makes the condemned, at the approach of death, anaesthetic to the quick or slow misery they are about to encounter. But, with memories of a toothache, I don't think that they enjoyed that last agony, whether it be that paralyzing but painful shock of electrocution or this searing of the flesh from faggots lighted beneath one's feet.

I hope that, in the above, my intention is clear. I have tried to give a paradigm of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in some of its many varieties and analogies.

This story of the Passion is the one story that has touched the heart of humanity more than any other; for it is true to what people know of what has been done (usually in a lesser measure) to them and what they have done (usually in a slighter degree) to others. Existence is a competition and in this competition even the kindest, the best-disposed of persons sometimes commit cruelties unwittingly and repent of those cruelties if they ever learn of them. Usually they do not learn of them; and usually they repent of cruelties they haven't committed. In their beds at night they expiate in agony some phrase they have used in conversation which they think may have given offense to one of their listeners; and this is usually not the phrase that has really cut. Many wound with deliberation, but most of us don't: we wound almost incessantly without intending to; we wound by the mere fact of our existence and by our adherence to those dimly perceived aims we have in life.

The parable of the just man who is condemned to die is very old; for we all know that when we seek justice we are thwarted everywhere. So many conflicting opinions about justice. What may seem justice to you may deprive me of my liberty, my income, my sustenance or my life; therefore I cannot always agree with your definition of "Justice". That puts us in disunion; but, in the hearts of both of us, there is, apart from us, away from our own particular conflicts of ego, a real ideal justice to be attained. It is very unfortunate for you and me and all of us that in all our experience or in all our reading we cannot find a single instance where our ideal has been realized. Yet the belief persists and its constant defeat in reality gives glory to the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The parable of the Passion, as we know it from the Scriptures and the Mass, was centuries old, perhaps milleniums old, before three of the least authenticated of the Four Gospels say a child was born to Mary, wife of Joseph, in a manger in Bethlehem in circumstances which gave rise to a reflection of two extreme points of view: the poetic and the nasty.

By this I mean there were some conditions surrounding the (later interpolated) story of the delivery of Jesus which gossips (and everybody *is* a gossip) subjected to different interpretations, according to their temperaments. One form of gossip held that Mary had been delivered of a child by divine conception while still a virgin, though long the wife of Joseph; that she had a special form of intercourse with the Great God Jehovah (Yahweh) whereby she conceived and bore a child.

There were elements about this story which narrow-minded persons refused to accept. They were quite ready, it seems, to accept the story if it had said that Mary was an unmarried virgin. But Mary *was* married and what one knows about the conduct of the people from whom Joseph and Mary sprung (if one has read the frightful Old Testament) is enough to know that it is extremely unlikely that a Judean woman should be married many months and still remain a virgin; for rape, bigamy, adultery, fornication and sodomy seem to have been the chief proclivities of those people. Some seem to have had special vices such as eating shell-fish and pork. One wonders how they found time to tend their sheep, so libidinous were they, according to the sacred and authentic Word of God.

The nasty-minded therefore put the reverse interpretation on the story. You can leave the nasty-minded to do that. It gave them a laugh to say that Joseph was a cuckold. It was the pleasure of the nasty-minded to chalk up on the walls of the cathedrals, during the Middle Ages, the information that he was a deceived husband and to draw pictures of an ass with long ears and label the libel with either the name or the initials of our Lord Jesus Christ, just as in Paris it is customary to chalk up on the walls of an *école libre*, "*A bas* Ramsay MacDonald."

These tendencies are immemorial and perpetual with human nature—at once to exalt to godhead a man beloved by a portion of the populace and to make him out both a bastard and a fool. Apotheosizing and denigration are co-eternal in the minds of men. They happened even with the legends of so late a hero as Lincoln. With less tragic heroes, such as Alexander and Caesar and George Washington, whose salvation was through works, not meditation, the tendency is to make them at once too perfect for the incredulous to stomach or to make them monsters of depravity which any reliable physician would explain is contrary to the most robust resources of virility.

Many serious and pitiable difficulties resulted from the comparative stupidity of the Apostolic Fathers. They established as sacred, inviolate and the word of God four biographies of His Son so disparate that they have won Ph.D's for Biblical exegitists ever since and have made militant atheists of millions of men, otherwise pious, who like to argue.

CATS AND DOGS

by B. M. STEIGMAN

MENTION the subject of dog to some Americans (who otherwise may possess human poise and judgment) and they become excited and wag irrational enthusiasm. Dare to intimate that you are not especially fond of the animal, and they will regard you as an unmanly sort of man, lacking the qualities of good sportsmanship; or, worse, as a self-centred creature devoid of human feelings; or, worse yet, as crafty and secretive, probably vicious, dishonest, in all likelihood a bully, a wife-beater, and a swindler of widows and orphans.

As a critique of pure reason anent the quadruped *Canis Familiaris* is here proposed, it may be well to dismiss from the audience those stalwart ones who can be made to see nothing but red, and who might interrupt the proceedings by sicking their unleashed virility at the professor. It may be just as well to ask those also to leave who through fate or their own inexplicable choice have the misfortune of being Eskimos, Alp climbers, partridge hunters, or itinerant beggars; for these are surely welcome to whatever mitigation they may discover in their companionship with dogs. Also those baffled ladies who find contentment in holding nothing better on their knees; also the dog-catcher who, reasonably enough, would voice professional protest.

It may then perhaps safely be intimated that the elevation of the dog to companionship with man is a modern degradation, against which the spirit of our human race, when properly aroused, voices contemptuous protest. *In ira veritas.* An angry eruption will throw up the truth; and an infuriated man hurls as his vilest epithet that of cur, or dog, or descendant of the maternal side of a dog. Ages of association with the animal have made our language on the subject unmistakable: nothing can be more abject than to lead a dog's life, nothing more ignobie than to die like a dog. The level assigned to the creature is apparent when we consider the type of person who goes to the dogs, or the sort of thing that is thrown to the dogs. An underdog is, accordingly, a term of unfathomable contempt. Dog-days are wretched days, dog-Latin is wretched Latin; dog-cabbage, dog-fennel, dog-berry, dog-leek are each the most wretched of their kind. The origin of doggerel does not seem to be certain; but anyone who has read that sort of verse can guess.

There is not an attribute of the dog's that is not held up for contempt by the language we use. There can be no doubt about the implication of "to fawn", "to lick boots", "to yap", "to bark", or "to be kicked around". We speak of "pawing something", and of "hounding someone"; and our fables illustrate spitefulness by "the dog in the manger", and greed by "the dog and the shadow". There is no mention in all the Bible of a single good trait attributed to a dog. The wise ancients saw the animal without sentimentality or affection: and they wrote of his returning to his vomit, his fleas, his mange, his unspeakable habits. Their Book is one to swear by.

Such sagacity as is sometimes attributed to the dog derives from his sense of smell. That is of all the senses the least glamourous. Keenness of sight or hearing or taste or touch is something to boast about. But ability to nose about carries with it an unenviable implication. There is something skulking about it, and something intrusive and meddlesome. It is an attribute of the spies and sleuths who ply their ill-bred censorship over the four (at their worst) infinitely politer senses we use when we see and hear and taste and touch. Rostand created as tragic a character as humanly can be conceived when he gave Cyrano de Bergerac the soul of a poet and swordsman, and the nose of a wolfhound. His was no more than the corporeal semblance of such a nose, the flesh merely without its sniffing spirit; yet all the brilliancy of his wit and of his rapier flashed in vain against the sinister glow of that purple protrusion.

Still, if the dog exercised his scent merely for its own sake he might be left unmolested to enjoy such distinction as nasal preëminence affords. The trouble is that his exhibition of olfactory virtuosity is invariably only an overture, a preliminary negotiation, which if not altogether polite is at least mentionable in public print. By way of establishing something of a cultural balance, nature has endowed the human companion of a dog with an intermittent eagerness to stop and study the architecture of high buildings, cloud formations, and stars.

The human companion of a cat has a less secure social and cultural status. For the cat may with impunity be loathed outright. And yet the qualities of the cat are less offensive than those of a dog. Socially, surely one prefers cattish people to those one would consider dogged. The former have the choicest of stories to tell—things one has wanted so much to hear, things that will make fascinating re-telling. Dogged people merely growl; they are obstinate and sullen; they are altogether uninteresting. The best that their most enthusiastic admirers can say for them is that they are faithful. That does not make for ineresting social intercourse.

Blood will tell; and certainly there is something aristocratic about the feline family that can boast of members as formidable as the lion, the lynx, and the tiger. The dog's relations, wolves and hyenas, are of the vilest rabble. The cat is exclusive, superior: he walks alone; he is permitted to look at a king. You do not fling a bone to an animal like that: you give him liver, abounding in vitamines, and fish, rich in phosphates. You do not expect him to beg, like a mongrel. Nor do you find him slobbering with gratitude.

He knows his own worth. Not for him the indifferent sort of mating that has given us unnumbered canine breeds. His courtship has far greater dignity and semblance to romance. There is really something enviable about being put out, when the family retires, to go in quest of adventure and the pleasures of night life; and the next day, when others toil, to lie curled up asleep before the fire. The dog is without imagination. He makes of sex a restless and quite unsightly preoccupation during the day. At night he tumbles in. Should the moon be up he may express himself in raucous barks. Of subtler tributes he knows nothing.

Our difference in attitude toward the two animals is apparent at the very outset of their careers. We regard a puppy as an insolent young upstart, in urgent need of a booting. But we think of something kittenish as playful and charming. The helpless newborn animals should make an equal appeal to our sympathy. But we soon discover that the life of one centres wholly about the impudent sense of smell, that he is virtually an elaborate nose carried about on four legs. The other has extraordinary eyes and ears, savage claws and teeth, impressive whiskers. The cat's whiskers were for some time in colloquial language the *ne plus ultra*. Truly the animal commands our admiration.

More, he commands something of fear. He was chosen, for good enough reason, presumably, as the companion of witches. He cavorts in unhallowed places, charged with electric and malignant disturbances. His silence and his secretiveness are ominous; so is his preference for darkness.

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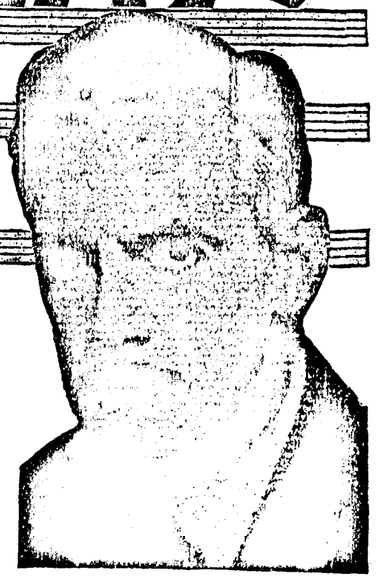

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